

CURRENT ANECDOTES

✧ A Preacher's Magazine of Illustrations, Homiletics, Sermons and Methods of Church Work. ✧

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Vol. V, No. 3.

CLEVELAND, DECEMBER, 1903.

Cut Gems, Vol. IX, No. 3.

GEMS OF ILLUSTRATION.

By RUSSELL H. CONWELL, Author of "Acres of Diamonds," etc.

OPEN THE SEALED ORDERS.

Psa. 119: 9; Psa. 37: 31; Psa. 119: 133. (158)

On an island south of Sumatra was found the wreck of an English man of war, which had never been heard of after it rounded the Cape many years before. They found amid that wreck the chests uninjured, though buried for a long time in the sand. When they burst them open, they found the record of the ship's crew, all of the log of the vessel, and they found there a great envelope containing the "sealed orders" for that ship. The sealed orders directed that as soon as they reached Cape Colony the ship should return immediately to St. Helena. In the plan of the English campaign against the French they needed that vessel at St. Helena, and yet it would not do to let the people on board know anything of their destination until they reached Cape Colony. They desired to deceive the enemy. This envelope, for reasons unknown, had never been opened, and the ship had gone down off the coast of Sumatra. The mystery has never been explained why that vessel went in that direction, why it should be found at last upon that shore, all hands lost in that sea, and above all, why those sealed orders given to the commander of the ship when he departed from London were not opened, for the seal was not broken. The nation's loss came because the sealed orders had never been opened.

POWER OF DOUBT. (160)

Matt. 28: 17; Mark 11: 23; Matt. 21: 21.

A woman in Boston purchased a valuable diamond in Paris, paying thousands of dollars for it. But she was very proud of it, and wore it with a great deal of pride. Finally she showed it to a jeweler with whom she was acquainted and he told her that it looked very much like one of the "paste diamonds" that they were then making in Paris. That aroused a doubt in her mind, and she went to another jeweler and asked him to show her a diamond

about the size of the one she owned. He did so, and she then asked him to show her one made of paste. He showed that to her, and she could not tell the difference. She concluded that she had bought an imitation diamond; and that was why she had seemingly secured such a bargain. She felt greatly depressed, and gave it to a servant girl. On her death it descended to one of her relatives, who sold it for a large sum as it was discovered to be a diamond of the purest water, and one of the finest ever imported from Europe. But when that woman had a doubt created in her mind as to the quality of the diamond it was a "paste diamond" to her. The world is only paste to him who believes it is paste. There is no joy on earth to the person who believes there is no happiness here. If we are to live a Christian life and get from life all that is richest and sweetest, we will need to take heed to the rear gates and not allow doubt and unbelief to creep in.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

Rom. 2: 7; 1 Cor. 15: 53; Jno. 14: 2. (161)

A friend told me this week that he saw an old man die at Chester, not many months ago, who was just 103 years of age. He said that the old man, just before his death, tried to get out of bed, and they said to him, "Father, where do you want to go? What do you want to do?" He answered, "Father is calling me to breakfast." He repeated it two or three times—"Father is calling me to breakfast." The old man had become a child again. He was in his little trundle bed again hearing his father's voice up the stairway calling him to come to breakfast. So when we have traveled around the circle of life, we get into the childhood of our old age, and hear the voices of the friends of our youth, which is one of the evidences of the belief that we shall hear those voices again. We would not thus recall them nor remember them if we were not to hear them again.

THE TURNING POINT. (162)

1 Kings 18: 21; Josh. 24: 14, 15.

I once met a man who had been a wanderer and a vagabond around the earth, but had just returned to his native land. I went up with him to where his home used to be in West-field. He had lived there forty-three years before and now there was scarcely anyone who knew him. We crossed a little bridge over a canal and he said, "This looks familiar." Then he added, "This is a new bridge, but I wish they had left the old bridge here; for the night I ran away from home I stopped on this bridge and put my elbows on the rail, and looked down into the water. And, as I watched the running water, I questioned whether I should go onward or back. It was a struggle which seemed to fill me with pain," he said; "and, with my bundle on my back, I leaned there and asked, 'Shall I go back to my parents or shall I go to sea? Shall I become a wanderer away from home or shall I return to my father and mother and ask their forgiveness and live in quietness in West-field?'" He decided to be a wanderer and go, and turned away to wander all his years a wretched vagabond upon the seas, or a drunkard in foreign lands.

When he returned there was no home there anymore, and no mother there. When he was ready to do her a kindness she was gone beyond his reach, and there was no father's voice to caution or encourage him. He had decided for the wrong at this great turning point of his life. Many another soul has been brought to such a turning point.

✓ PROMPT DECISION. (163)

Josh. 24: 15; Psal. 119: 60; Zech. 1: 4.

There come to us periods when men and women must decide promptly questions which will influence the whole of their lives. If they do not decide, they drift to the wrong. Indecision and delay and procrastination bring ruin; as happened to the ministers of three denominations on the river Rhine. After they had started and had gotten out into the stream, the Episcopalian wanted to land downstream, the Baptist wanted to land away up the rapids, and the Methodist wanted to land about half way between, and they all fell to discussing, each arguing for the place he wanted to visit first. The Baptist said: "It is nearer to go up there," and the Methodist said, "It is nearer to go straight across," but all the while they were discussing the question they were drifting down, until they struck on the rocks of the rapids, where they were thrown into the river, and were only saved "by the skin of their teeth."

GIVING. (164)

2 Cor. 8: 2, 12; Mark 12: 42-44.

A little girl carrying a little box came up to Professor Smith, in his mission school in New York, one day and giving it to him as her contribution, she said: "Mr. Smith, be careful when you open it." He said, "What is

this?" He thought the money would be likely to fall out but the box was very light. She said, "That's two mice." "Why?" Mr. Smith said, "what do you mean by bringing me two mice?" She replied, "Didn't you tell about the woman that brought two mice in Christ's time? And you said we all could probably do as much as that woman did." And she added, "It took me and my little brother all the week to find these two mice." That little child of the slums (mistaking "mites" for "mice") did as much in the sight of God as those who gave two thousand dollars at that same time.

CONQUERED DEATH. (165)

Heb. 2: 15; 1 Cor. 15: 54-57.

Bishop Fallows tells us of a little girl who had been told many times during her life that death was a great dark river; she had heard people talk about it, and preach about it. But shortly before her death, her eyes grew bright and a flush came into her face, and she looked up to those around the bed and said: "This river is only a brook; I can wade it."

THE FUTURE LIFE. (166)

Rom. 6: 23; John 11: 25; John 6: 40.

I stood by Phoebe Cary's chair the day before she died, and we conversed concerning her early life. She said she wished to go back to her old homestead before she died, and see her lover's grave. She added: "Before he went from this world I had no interest in the other world. I never questioned whether there was an Eternity or not. The thought never seemed to have any power over me. Men talked about it and preached about it, and I read about it, but it never struck my heart and never touched my life. I had no desire to know of eternal things. But when my loved one went so suddenly, falling dead in the street, I asked over and over, 'Is there another world? Will I meet him? Will I live with him forever?' And then I so desired to know." That desire led her to that beautiful poetry which is in the hymn books of all the world today.

One sweetly solemn thought

Comes to me o'er and o'er;

I am nearer some today

Than I ever have been before.

TOO CERTAIN. (167)

Amos 9: 10; Obadiah 3.

There was a congressman in Massachusetts who failed to get an election by two votes. He was so sure of it that he did not take any interest in one small town of the district. There was one town in which there were no speeches, no parades, no fireworks. Nothing was done to disturb the apathy of the voters there; no effort was made to bring out the independent voters. He lost the whole election by two votes. He was too sure of the election, as some Christians are so sure of their election, and are so certain of going to heaven that they are forgetting to love, and they may miss it by a narrow margin.

MIND AND BODY. (168)

Prov. 17: 22; Prov. 15: 30.

Not long ago I was very much interested in reading a pamphlet written in 1654 by a Venetian named Conaro. He was a man skilled by experience and long study, and at the age of 95 he wrote an essay upon diseases produced by certain conditions of mind, and it is still a standard of instruction in the German Universities. He states that hate generally produces some disease of the kidneys; that jealousy frequently produces some disturbance of the heart. He shows in his essay the effect of envy and covetousness on the liver and the spleen, and how melancholia affects the brain. The advance made in medical science during the last one hundred years is something wonderful, yet I was greatly surprised to see what they knew away back in 1654. A writer of 1701 showed how laziness brought about a great number of diseases, yet if it carried off from the world all those afflicted with it, it might be of some advantage. He said laziness produced fatty degeneration of the heart, and that the heart of a person taking no exercise beat more and more softly until the fat gathered round the heart and then, if the person were greatly excited, and the heart beat very quickly, instant death was often caused. It is the most dangerous thing in the world to grow fat without work. But the man who works and grows fat has nothing to fear, for his heart is made to pump and thump in such a manner that he is in no danger of fat or of fatty degeneration.

FALSE HOPES. (169)

Jer. 14: 14; Mark 13: 21, 22.

I once heard of a man down in Maine who dug a tunnel from his cellar to a well, situated near the house. The tunnel entered close to the water, and he said that it was "an enchanted well." People came a long distance to look at it and to hear the music that seemed to come up from the water, but it was really caused by some one playing a mouth organ at the end of the tunnel. The "enchanted well" was soon supposed to possess magic power to cure all kinds of diseases. So people came from far and wide to drink this water. It was sold by the pint, and cured a great many persons. But at last the imposition was discovered and then all those who had been cured were sick again, and an epidemic of disease afflicted the healthy locality.

LETTING IN THE LIGHT. (170)

Rev. 17: 14; Isa. 9: 2; Isa. 60: 1.

Out there beyond St. Louis they will show you the old home of General Grant, where before the civil war General Grant was cutting wood and carting it into St. Louis. A plum tree was growing in one corner of the lot on which the cottage stood, and a number of wide-spreading trees shaded it. Mrs. Grant urged General Grant to let the sunlight in on the plum tree. He did cut down one of the large trees and the next year the plum tree blossomed and bore the most luscious plums. It had never borne any fruit before. If you want General Grant's life illustrated you will find it in that tree. There he was buried from

active public life, there in that land, unknown and unnoticed, carting wood and selling it to people who did not pay him. But when the war came God let the light in on General Grant and he blossomed forth and bore the fruit of greatness that was there so long concealed.

"Ah well, for us all some sweet hope lies,
Deeply hidden from human eyes,
And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away."

USE OF LEISURE. (171)

Rom. 12: 11; Prov. 27: 23; Eccl. 9: 10;
Eccl. 10: 10.

When George Stephenson was running a stationary engine in the mines in the north of England, on one holiday all the miners and engineers went off, drank their beer, danced through the day, and came home more tired than when they went. They returned to their work the next day just the same people they were the day before. But that holiday made another man of George Stephenson. Instead of going on the excursion he said, "I desire to know something about this engine I am running." He spent this holiday taking it all apart and examining every valve. Oh, that day did much for George Stephenson; it also did very much for the world, for the desire to know more of a steam engine led to the locomotive. He who has charge of machinery of any kind if he would be successful in life, let him arouse a desire to know more of machinery, to understand the relationship of wheel to wheel, and of power to effect.

HEAVEN AND SELF. (172)

Micah 6: 8; 1 Peter 5: 6; Matt. 11: 29.

A little girl walking in New York with her father saw some workmen on top of a building twenty stories high, and she asked, "Papa, what are those boys doing up there?" He replied that they were not boys, but men who looked like boys because they were so high. The little girl meditated for a moment, then said solemnly, "They won't amount to much when they get to heaven will they?" The question gave the father food for thought. As we rise toward heaven, self becomes smaller, until by and by, when we reach the height of heavenly character, self will not amount to much.

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SPIRITUAL SEARCH-LIGHTS.

By A. C. DIXON, D. D., Ruggles St. Baptist Church, Boston.

LINKS IN GOD'S PROVIDENCE. (174)

Prov. 16: 9; Prov. 20: 24; Prov. 3: 6.

John Clough little thought when he was studying engineering, solving perplexing problems, surveying land, building a railway, and making roads, that he was forging links in God's providence for the salvation of ten thousand Telugus in one year. This knowledge of engineering led him to apply for the government contract for building a canal. He employed five thousand natives, and preached to them every evening. He preached for one month on the same text, "God so loved the world." Then he dismissed the first five thousand and employed five thousand more for the next month, and at the end of the year there were 10,000 Telugus ready to be baptized. And all that hinged upon Clough's knowledge of engineering.

THE POISON OF PLEASURE. (175)

Psa. 58: 4; Jas. 3: 8; Psa. 140: 3.

A gentleman in Paris desired to buy a ring, and, as he tried on several rings in the jeweler's store, he noticed one that was set with tiny eagle's claws. The next day his hand began to swell. The doctor told him that he was poisoned, and on inquiry he found that the old ring came from Italy, and was once used for poisoning an enemy. For 400 years that particle of poison had remained between the eagle's claws. Watch the rings of pleasure which the world offers, there are within them the eagle's claws with the poison.

RULING ONE'S SELF (176)

Prov. 16: 32; Jas. 1: 19, 20; Eccl. 7: 9.

Peter the Great, in 1722, issued an edict that all masters who maltreated their servants should be considered insane and guardians appointed. Peter himself so maltreated his gardener that he died from the effects of it. "Alas, alas," said the Czar, "I have civilized my own subjects, I have conquered other nations, yet I have not been able to civilize and conquer myself." "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

THE TRUMPET OF JUDGMENT. (177)

Acts. 17: 31; Eccl. 3: 17; Heb. 9: 27; Rev. 20: 12.

A king said to his worldly brother, "I am a great sinner against God and fear death and judgment." The brother made light of his melancholy thoughts. At that time when a man was condemned to death it was customary to sound a trumpet before his door as the signal for taking him to prison or the place of execution. The king ordered that the trumpet should be sounded before the door of his mocking brother. Startled and terrified he begged to be carried into the presence of the king that he might learn how he had

offended him. "My brother," replied the king, "you have not offended me, but if the sight of the executioner is so terrible to you, shall not I, who have grievously offended God, fear to be brought before the judgment seat of Christ?" So God in love sounds the trumpet of impending judgment before the door of every selfish, sinful heart. It is wise to heed its warning. To treat it lightly is akin to insanity.

RICE OR LIFE? (178)

Micah 6: 9; Job 36: 13; Jer. 10: 24.

Several years ago there was an earthquake in Japan near the coast, and an old man who had been through many earthquakes looked toward the sea and saw a wave 30 or 40 feet high rise up in the air and recede from the land. He ran out of the village to the high ground where the rice shocks were and set them afire. When the people saw the fields burning they rushed out, and when some one accused him of being the incendiary, they were about to stone him, for the rice fields were their food, but he said, "Look," and as they looked back toward the village they saw it submerged by the waves. If the people had not come out to see their rice fields burn, they would all have been drowned. The old man was then the hero of the town. God sometimes has to attract our attention by treating us severely, to burn some things in our lives in order to save us from danger, to be severe in order to be gentle, and when we see His purpose in it we love Him all the better for it.

THE KING'S INVITATION. (179)

Matt. 11: 28; Isa. 55: 3; John 7: 37.

When Leonard Woods, president of Bowdoin College, was invited by Louis Phillipe to attend a reception, he did not answer the invitation, but appeared on time at the reception. When the King met him he said he had feared that he would not have the pleasure of Dr. Woods' company, as he had not heard from him in response to the invitation. "We thought," replied Dr. Woods, "that the invitation of a King was to be obeyed, not answered." Christ invites us, first of all, to come to Him, that we may have the bread and water of life, and then take them to others. His invitation is a command; it should be our joy to obey, and nothing should hinder.

CRITICISM OR INVITATION? (180)

Gal. 6: 1; Matt. 18: 15; Col. 1: 28; Acts 20: 31; 2 Cor. 5: 20.

A certain political leader in New York City has been during the last fifteen years criticized and abused by almost every pastor in public and private; how many of us have gone to him and preached unto him Jesus? I knew one man who did. While Mr. Moody

was stopping at the Murray Hill Hotel, he learned that this political leader was in the house, and he went to him with an invitation to attend church and he urged upon him the importance of personal salvation. The much abused political boss listened with great attention, and thanked the evangelist for the interest that he took in him. If we talked less about men, and more about Jesus, it would be better for us and for them and for the kingdom of God. Let no position of great wealth, political honor, or social standing prevent us from approaching people, when the Spirit moves us to do so, and telling them of the great salvation.

THE SUNKEN CITY. (181)

Phil. 3: 7, 8; 1 Tim. 6: 6.

There is a legend in England about the sunken city of Is. Two or three places are pointed out as the spot where the city during an earthquake sank out of sight. Tradition says that during a storm the steeples of the churches can be seen in the trough of the sea, and even during a calm the bells of the church steeples still ring out, and they ring the appropriate song or tune for each day. The sunken city still makes music. Has your wealth sunk out of sight? Have things that you prized gone out of view? If you have the spirit that God would have you possess there still comes music from the sunken city of loss, and every steeple that has gone beneath the waves sends out harmonies of hope, of joy, and of peace.

GIVE OR GET? (182)

Ex. 35: 29; 1 Chron. 29: 9; 1 Chron. 29: 14; 2 Cor. 9: 7.

A foreign missionary was some time ago addressing a large congregation. He noticed a boy intently listening, who seemed greatly interested. The earnest face of the little fellow led the missionary to say that even children might preach the gospel in foreign lands by their prayers and gifts. At the close of the address the boy pressed his way to the platform, and with eager face took the hand of the missionary. "Do you want to give something to the cause?" asked the missionary. "No, sir," replied the boy, "I was just wondering if you had any foreign stamps to give away." The spirit of this boy too aptly illustrates the spirit of some Christians. They come to church and do almost everything just for what they can get out of the church, rather than for what they can give to it, and thus they remain famished and lean, for in the spiritual life we feed better upon what we give than upon what we receive.

PHOTOGRAPHING SIN. (183)

Num. 32: 23; Gen. 44: 16; Psa. 139: 11.

In the Bank of Paris there is above the desk of the cashier and paying teller a door, behind which is a photographer with his camera. When one of the clerks presses a button, this door quietly opens and the picture

of the man in the act of signing a cheque is instantaneously taken. Many a suspicious character has thus been photographed; forgers have been caught, and their denial before the court has amounted to nothing, because the bank could produce their photographs in the very act of forging a cheque. And thus our sins are being photographed on our very faces, our consciences, our inner souls, and upon others whom we influence.

SIN WILL BE DISCOVERED. (184)

Num. 32: 33; Gen. 44: 16; Isa. 59: 12; Prov. 13: 21.

Sin is a detective that cannot be eluded. As Dr. Donne was passing through a churchyard he noticed that the old sexton in digging a grave had cast up a skull and some bones. He took the skull in his hands and examined it, and was surprised to see that just above the temple there was a nail in it. "Who was buried here?" asked the doctor. The sexton informed him that a man by a certain name was buried there years before. "Under what circumstances did he die?" "Nothing peculiar," replied the sexton, "except, as I remember, his widow married another man a few days afterward." Dr. Donne extracted the nail from the skull, wrapped it in a piece of paper, and hastened to the home of the woman who was once the wife of the man. Unwrapping the paper, he handed her the nail, and asked her if she had ever seen that before. Turning pale and trembling, she at once confessed her crime and acknowledged that she had killed her husband in order to marry another man. Deny sin as you will, cover it up as you may, try to forget it, but, like this nail, something will remind you of it, and bring it before your accusing conscience in all its ghastliness.

"HIS OWN PLACE." (185)

Acts 1: 25; Acts 4: 23; John 3: 5. John 3: 19-21.

On the Bothnia, in mid-Atlantic, there were three hundred delegates going to the Sunday School Convention in London. Mr. Blake, of Chicago, put a great map before the delegates, representing the resurrection of Christ, and its relations to history and doctrine. A Jew, one of the passengers, as soon as he saw the name of Christ and the resurrection, began to grow red in the face, and went bustling to the captain to say that it was insult to him and his people. Now, suppose that Jew, just as he was, should be translated to heaven, where Christ is the center of song, and where His resurrection is the theme of conversation. Would he be any happier than he was on the Bothnia? He would break up the choir if he could. Imagine him rushing up to Gabriel, making complaint that the saints and angels are singing of Christ and the resurrection! A man in Boston bought a ticket to a race-course, and by mistake got on a boat going to a camp meeting, where he was among Methodist preachers, singing hymns, talking about the Bible, and speaking of their Christian experience. He came to the captain and said: "Captain, I was never so near perdition in my life. I will give you ten dollars to

let me out at the nearest place." Put that gambler in heaven—would he be happy? No, indeed. Good surroundings cannot make bad men happy. Unless there be a taste for spiritual things, spiritual surroundings are not happiness. "Ye must be born again." Those who love whiskey will not find a bar-room even on the back streets of heaven. For all who roll sin as a sweet morsel under their tongues there will be no course of sin at the celestial banquet.—Dixon.

A SERVANT'S SACRIFICE. (186)

Mark 12: 43, 44; 2 Cor. 8: 2, 12.

In Ceylon, a little church needed a house in which to worship, and a young native convert by the name of Maria Peabody offered to give a lot which was to be her marriage dowry. The Ceylonese knew what that meant, and urged her not to act so foolishly, but she persisted in making the sacrifice and the church was built. This young Ceylonese woman was named Maria Peabody, because she had been educated with money sent from America through a Mrs. Maria Peabody. When Dr. Poor came to this country he expressed a desire to meet Maria Peabody, that he might tell her how much good her money had accomplished. At a meeting in New Hampshire he requested the audience to inform him if any one knew where Maria Peabody lived. At the close of the service Maria Peabody introduced herself, and Dr. Poor congratulated her on the good that she had done. "I am sorry to say," replied Mrs. Peabody, "that I am not the one who gave the money; it had been sent in my name; but

the donor was my black cook, Louisa Osborn, who now lives in Massachusetts." She said that Louisa, though she received but a dollar and a half a week as wages, gave fifty cents a month to foreign missions, and on her return from missionary meeting one night she said to her mistress: "We were told at the meeting that \$20 a year would educate a native girl, and I want to give it." Mrs. Peabody told her that that was too much to give out of her small wages, that she could not lay aside anything for a rainy day, and for old age. Louisa thought a moment and replied: "The Lord will take care of me; if I cannot do better I can go to the poorhouse, and you know in heathen countries there are no poorhouses; only Christians help the poor." Dr. Poor became all the more anxious to see this humble Christian, and in Lowell, Mass., he announced after telling the story to an audience, that he had heard that Louisa Osborn lived somewhere in that vicinity, and he would like very much to see her. As he was leaving the church a black woman in the vestibule approached him with extended hand. He said, "This, I suppose, is Louisa Osborn?" "Yes, sir, that is my name." "How did you come to give the money to educate that girl?" inquired Dr. Poor. "It was the Lord that led me to do it," she answered. And thus this poor black woman, by supplying the needs of Christ in Ceylon, became really the mother of the church, which has gone on for years glorifying her Master. Her crown in glory may be brighter than the crowns of some who have given their millions, for God counts not the amount we give, but the sacrifice we make.

WINDOWS FOR SERMONS.

By REV. LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, D. D.

LOST IN THE CITY. (187)

Jno. 12: 25; Jno. 18: 9; 1 Cor. 3: 15; Mark 9: 50.

A man whose face showed that he was under a tremendous mental strain hurried into a police station in New York city recently, and asked if a negro woman and a year-old baby had been picked up astray in the precinct. When told none had been found he became almost frantic with grief, and related to the sympathetic sergeant how he had come to the city accompanied by his wife and baby, attended by a nurse. They had gone out shopping and had taken the child and nurse along. They had entered one of the large stores leaving the nurse and the baby outside. They got turned around in the store and when they went out found themselves on another street, and they had searched for hours in vain, becoming all the time more anxious and excited. This turned out all right, as the faithful nurse waited until the store closed, and then took her little charge back to the hotel. But how suggestive it is of losses which are happening in the city every day. Many parents come to the city, and lose their children there beyond hope. Many young men lose their manhood there. The city is a great place for losing as well as gaining.

THE INDIVIDUAL GIFT. (188)

Ex. 4: 2; 1 Cor. 12: 4, 11; 1 Tim. 4: 14.

The son of a wealthy American, having graduated from college, went to Paris to study art. He worked hard in the Paris studios for three years. One day he made up his mind that he would never be a great artist, and that he would rather be a successful farmer than a fairly successful painter. Now—although still a young man—he has a model farm, covering ten thousand acres, in Illinois. He knows every foot of it, what it should produce, and he sees that it produces everything that it should. He has built a magnificent house, in which not an ornament jars the finest taste. He goes to Europe every winter, and studies European methods of scientific farming and cattle raising. He is developing the land as his fathers did before him. He employs scores of men; he helps the smaller farmers about him; he is likely to be a great and potent factor in the development of the state during the next few years. This man was wise enough to use the gift he had. God is saying to everyone of us, as was said in Old Testament times to the man with an ox goad, "What is that in thine hand?" And if we will give that to Him in honest service He will give us strength to do something worth while.

A CHRISTIAN FIRST. (189)

Matt. 6:33; Matt. 5:6; 1 Kings 8:11-13.

Francois Millet was one of the greatest painters of his day. His "Angelus" captured the eye of the world. It is said that of all his ancestors and family relations none had so much influence in the making of the artist as his grandmother. She was an old country-woman of intense religious faith, living in God, seeing everything in God, seeing God in everything, and mingling God in every scene of nature and every act of life. One of Millet's earliest recollections was of his grandmother waking him when he was quite a small child and saying to him: "Up, my little Francois! If you only knew what a long time the birds have been singing the glory of God!" When he had to leave home to go to Paris, his grandmother said: "I would rather see you dead than unfaithful to God's commands." At a later time, when he had begun to make his way in Paris, she reminded him again: "Remember, my Francois, that you were a Christian before you were a painter. Paint for eternity, and think that the trump which will call to Judgment is on the eve of sounding." The world would be revolutionized for good if Christian lawyers would remember to be Christians first, and doctors to be Christians first, and businessmen to be Christians first. And yet that is exactly what Jesus commanded when He said: "Seek first the kingdom of God."

AN UNCONSCIOUS SLAVE. (190)

Prov. 23:31, 32; Prov. 20:1; 2 Pet. 2:19.

A young man had carelessly formed the habit of taking a glass of liquor every morning before breakfast. An older friend advised him to quit before the habit should grow too strong. "Oh, there is no danger; it's a mere notion; I can quit anytime," replied the drinker. "Suppose you try it tomorrow morning," suggested the friend. "Very well; to please you I'll do so, but I assure you there is no cause for alarm." A week later the young man met his friend again. "You are not looking well," observed the latter. "Have you been ill?" "Hardly," replied the other one. "But I am trying to escape a dreadful danger; and I fear I shall be ill before I shall have conquered. My eyes were opened to an imminent peril when I gave you that promise a week ago. I thank you for your timely suggestion." "How did it affect you?" inquired the friend. "The first trial utterly deprived me of appetite for food. I could eat no breakfast, and was nervous and trembling all day. I was alarmed when I realized how insidiously the habit had fastened on me, and resolved to turn square about and never touch another drop. Swearing off has pulled me down severely, but I am gaining, and I mean to keep the upper hand after this. Strong drink shall never catch me in his net again."

HELPED BY BEING BELIEVED IN.

Phil. 2:12; Gal. 5:10; 2 Cor. 7:16;
2 Thess. 3:4. (191)

A recent writer says that our belief in men is a kind of light and air for them to grow in.

Only try to imagine what you would have amounted to if from your earliest years you had not had someone to believe in you! Try to imagine what you would do now if, all at once, the eyes that look on you in friendly fashion turned strange and cold! It is this trust that we give to one another that makes growth in us possible. "I was awful mean when I came to Cabbage Patch," says Lovey Mary. "Somehow you all just bluffed me into being better. I wasn't used to being bragged on, and it made me want to be good more than anything." The truth of this Jesus saw, and acted on. And He acts on it today. Men are constantly nerved up to do their best because of his faith in them.

SYMPATHY WITH ONE ANOTHER.

Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26; Heb. 13:3;
Job 30:25. (192)

Dr. Len G. Broughton, of Atlanta, speaking on the "Mastery of Discouragement" tells this story of the late Henry Grady, the famous southern editor. As a young man Grady was employed on the New York Herald. As he was leaving his boarding house one morning, he saw a hearse standing in front of the adjoining house. "Who is dead?" Grady asked of his landlady. "Sure, I don't know," was her reply, with such a tone of indifference that it fell like a clod on the heart of the sympathetic young Georgian who had sorrowed from his youth in every grief coming into the family of a neighbor. As he started down to his office, a little coffin was being borne down the steps, followed by a mother who was crying as if her heart would break. He turned to ask his landlady if she was going to the funeral, when she said: "Sure, it's none of my affair." Such seeming heartlessness made such an impression on Grady that he said to his wife, "Pack your trunks. I am going back to Georgia, where people have time to shed a tear with their neighbor when death removes their child, and where it is an 'affair' of the whole neighborhood when grief invades the home. It is no home for us where our next-door neighbor is heart-broken, and nobody cares about her grief." There is something wrong in our civilization which we call Christian which seem to leave the least sympathy where society pretends to be the most civilized. It is not a weakness of Christianity, it is a lack of the fullness of its spirit.

THE UNION OF PRAYER AND DEED.

Jas. 2:20; Jas. 1:22; Rom. 2:13. (193)

The Rev. W. S. Danley tells the story of a man who had been caught on the river in a sudden break-up of the ice, and who himself expected to be drowned, and whose neighbors had given him up as lost. The man had thrown himself on his knees on one of the pieces of ice, and was engaged in what he supposed was his last prayer on earth, when his friends on shore noticed that the pieces of ice had readjusted themselves so as to make a safe way from where he was kneeling to the land. They lifted their voices, and shouted to the poor man to stop praying and

run to the shore. He opened his eyes, saw his opportunity and was saved. Prayer and deeds must go hand in hand.

HE TOOK HIS CHANCE (194)

Luke 23: 42; Rev. 22: 17.

While the whale-back steamer Forest Castle, from Liverpool, was off the New Foundland Banks, an owl as white as snow felt exhausted on the deck. The owl made a desperate flight from an iceberg to the ship. When the iceberg parted company with the ice field of the far north, it evidently carried with it the owl, which clung to its raft of crystal until flight was useless, a stretch of open sea forming a barrier over which the bird did not dare attempt flight. It had been watching for an opportunity of escape, and when the Forest Castle appeared on the horizon, the bird made its great dash for life. It was half starved and ill prepared for such a long chase, but it was its one opportunity and it won the race. There are men and women who are in the condition of that bird. They are drifting on an iceberg of selfishness and sin to certain ruin. The Gospel ship passes in sight. The invitation is heard; it is the chance of a lifetime. If they will, they may be saved.

THE SECRET OF YOUTH. (195)

Psa. 103: 5; Isa. 40: 31.

Julia Ward Howe, at eighty-one, is merry, witty, and active; as ready to preside over a large meeting, or to introduce a guest, or to lecture, or to make a brilliant extempore speech, as forty years ago. Colonel T. W. Higginson said of her on her recent birthday that he had always been taught to reverence age and youth, and she combined the two. Mrs. Howe said that when she was a child an old friend said to her: "Julia, never give in to growing old," and that was the secret of it all.

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ILLUSTRATIONS FROM RECENT SERMONS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND
DIRECTION. (196)

Psa. 25:4, 12; John 17:25, 26; Psa. 33:18.

Rev. S. P. Cadman preaching from Prov. 3:6, said: Let us make our projects in the light of His purposes, though they should wear out several solar systems in the process. The soul of man can wear out a solar system as the body of the man wears out clothes, as Dr. Bixby has reminded us. But the solar system can never wear out the soul of a man; the divine spark partakes of its origin and is not easily quenched.

But as I have already said, our practical acquaintance even with the perishing symbols of time, is a limited one. Take music, the universal speech of men, greater than language in its power of expression and range of influence. Yet Mr. Harrison, one of our wisest statesmen, could not understand music and Mr. Spurgeon was indescribably distressed by it. There are scientists who are atrophied upon the divine side of life and musicians who can write superb harmonies, and paint bewitching tone colors, and yet could never harmonize their passions or control their lusts. Limitation everywhere, knowledge fragmentary, acquaintance brief, sin defiling, such are the characteristics of human intercourse. Just as Nansen found near to the North Pole and under the eternal ice the beat of the pulse of the Gulf Stream, so in the very heart of the universe the religion of Jesus discerns the throb of possibility, the thrill of hope.

EXPERIENCE, PRIVILEGE, LIFE.

John 15:5; Phil. 4:13; 1 Tim. 4:12. (197)

Rev. D. G. Downey, preaching from the threefold text, Matt. 5:13, Gal. 5:9, and 1 Peter 2:9, said: "Beautifully bosomed in the Cumberland hills of England lies Thirlmere Lake; around it high the hills and town; beyond these hillsides, from springs and mountain tarns high up in the summits the little rivulets and streamlets pour their waters down into the bosom of the lake. Ninety miles away lies the great city of Manchester, big, busy, bustling and black. Down through conduits and pipes along the valleys and under the hills the clear water of Thirlmere Lake is carried, and then by another system of pipes and conduits is distributed to all the people of the vast city. Even so should it be with us, every Christian in constant communication and touch with Christ, the central source of light and life. The church a great reservoir or distributing agency, and then the life of the church, through its various members, running forth it may purify, tone, strengthen, refresh and satisfy the needs of the neighborhood, and so out till it touches the confines of the globe. This is the revival that our common Christianity most deeply needs."

GOD'S NATURE. (198)

1 John 4:8; Deut. 32:4; Psa. 116:5; Heb. 12:29; Job 36:26.

Right Rev. Frederick Burgess, Bishop of Long Island, in a sermon said: "One day, in ancient Rome, when the newly elected praetor, arrayed in regal garments, bearing his ivory scepter and preceded by the victors, had taken his place upon the throne, his two sons were brought before him and convicted of the crime of treason. The proud Roman showed no hesitancy in pronouncing the sentence of death and the two young men were slain in the presence of their father. In the ancient town of Mahanaim, on the other side of Jordan, a king sat one afternoon at the city gate, waiting anxiously for tidings of the battle which his army was waging against his rebellious son. At length the watchman on the tower above him described a messenger running toward the city and behind him still another. The first courier approached the king and hailed him with glad news. 'Is the young man, Absalom, safe?' was the king's only question. But the messenger answered prudently that he could not tell him. Now the second came and kneeling before the king, exclaimed: 'Tidings, my lord the king.' It was also news of a glorious, overwhelming victory, but still from the king's lips there comes the same question: 'Is the young man, Absalom, safe?' This time the courier can only speak the truth, and then all we see is an aged man climbing wearily up the stone staircase to his chamber, repeating the refrain of a broken heart: 'O, my son, Absalom, my son Absalom, would God that I had died for thee, my son Absalom, my son!'

"These two men, like the two nations they represent, are far apart. Brutus had sunk the father in the judge; David had sunk the judge in the father. Rome, the city of Brutus, was to become the author of the greatest system of jurisprudence the world has ever seen, and Bethlehem, the city of David, was to become the birthplace of the Messiah. The one is a nation of law and the other is a nation of religion. Now it is the glory of Jesus Christ that He takes up these two ideas, which were thus represented by these two men, and unites them in the person of God. Take and study the New Testament and you will see that His one aim is to reveal God as a father and a judge. Now it is the home which He pictures to us with the father sitting on the housetop hoping and yearning for a lost boy's return; but quite as frequently and quite as strongly it is a king, sitting on his throne in judgment while the crowds of men pass before him on their trial. It seems as if the truth could not be found in the one thought to the exclusion of the other but only in the blending of these two ideas of justice and of love. To fix our minds upon one thought rather than the other will result in making us either weak or pitiless in our theology."

THE ADVENTUROUS SOUL. (199)

Num. 13: 30, 31; Rom. 8: 31; Phil. 4: 13; Josh. 23: 10.

Rev. J. W. Chadwick in a recent sermon said: "That is a good story of Dr. Dionysius Lardner, who wrote a book proving convincingly that ocean steam navigation was impossible, and the first copies of the book brought to this country were brought over in the first ocean steamship. True or not, the story has a symbolic value. It is a parable of many things that happen in this world. There are always philosophers and others insisting that this or that thing cannot be done, and the adventurous soul pays little heed to them but goes right on and does the impossible thing."

THE SOUL'S NEED OF CHRIST. (200)

Isa. 43: 2; Psa. 27: 1, 13; Jno. 6: 37.

Rev. G. R. Lunn, preaching from John 4: 49, said: "I remember the words of one of my seminary professors in regard to a dramatic, because so pathetic, scene in a prayer service. It was the night of that terrible commercial crisis in New York, known as Black Friday. The pastor of a certain wealthy church went to his prayer meeting with heavy heart. What could he say that would comfort men who had lost fortunes in one dread day? He had before him many discouraged souls. To them he poured out his heart. In the awful stillness of that room he read in quiet voice the twenty-third Psalm and made sympathetic comment. That Scripture was the one thing needful. Those despondent hearts were rekindled with hope and fresh courage and new faith. The haggard faces took on a new light. Sympathy had won and became the tie which bound them to their Lord. They could face the world again with courage because the strength of Christ was their support. It is so true that failure and discouragement has often pointed out the path leading to the Christ who said: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, all ye that are despondent and discouraged, and I will give you rest."

DOING THE WILL OF GOD. (201)

John 7: 17; Eph. 6: 7; Heb. 13: 21; 1 Peter 2: 15.

Rev. John Erskine Adams, in a recent sermon from John 4: 34, said: Saint Bernard had over his study table in illuminated letters, these words: "Bernade, ad quid venisti?" "Bernard, why are you here?" The reference was not to the routine tasks of his life. But it was: What is the animating purpose of your life? What is the meaning of your existence? Is every pleasure and every task made subservient to the one purpose: the one supreme motive of your being? Amiel in his journal, records, "Life is a mass of beginnings and endings." We have all experienced his meaning. We have begun to build, but did not finish. We have laid our plans and found them broken in upon and destroyed; we have skimmed over the surface of things, but not gotten at their hidden meaning. And if we ask the reason, it is evident. We have failed because no presiding purpose has woven the tangled skein into harmony and beauty. We have been dallying with purpose, we have been

half willing, we have been hanging forever in the balance, and so we have been losing our grip on life.

"Better an ignoble purpose even," says Dr. Pierson, "than none at all." Better to be a Saul of Tarsus, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, but breathing, than such a man as Robert Dale Owen, who confesses: "I committed one fatal error in my youth, and dearly have I bewailed it: I started in life without an object, even without an ambition. My temperament disposed me to ease, and to the full I indulged the disposition. I said to myself: I have all that I see others contending for—why should I struggle? I know not the curse that lights on those who have never to struggle for anything. Had I created for myself a definite pursuit—literary, scientific, artistic, social, political, no matter what, so there was something to labor for and to overcome—I might have been happy. I feel this now—too late. The power is gone. Habits have become chains. Through all the profitless years gone by I seek vainly for something to remember with pride or even to dwell on with satisfaction. I have thrown away a life. I feel sometimes as if there were nothing remaining to me worth living for. I am an unhappy man."

HOW TO BEST SERVE. (202)

Elizabeth Fry was a thoughtless girl of 17 years, used to all the refinements of luxury, and a life of ease; wholly selfish and wholly useless, when God came to her through the voice of a Quaker preacher. She consecrated her life to God. Her meat and her drink were the doing of the Master's will and work. At the age of 65 she wrote: "Since my heart was touched, at the age of 17, I believe I have never awakened from sleep, in sickness or in health, by day or by night, without my first waking thought being how best I might serve my Lord." There could be but one result from such consecration. God sent her among the outcast, and her life became a constant benediction. The work she began in Great Britain among female convicts spread all over the continent of Europe. Letters from crowned heads, as well as from philanthropic people in the common walks of life, began to pour in, inviting her to visit the prisons of other lands; and subsequently she visited Scotland, France, Germany and other countries, upon this errand of mercy, everywhere hailed as an angel of peace and good will to men. The prisons of Europe were reformed through her labors, and the laws to punish criminals were greatly modified in nearly all European countries. Indeed, the reformation spread throughout the world. This was the work accomplished by one woman, who had submitted her life wholly to the will of God. She was changed from a thoughtless, frivolous girl into a woman of great usefulness and power. And what was true of Elizabeth Fry may be true of each one of us. We may not be called to so high a task. We may find our horizon circumscribed, and our opportunities limited; but if our meat and our drink are to do the will of God, the opportunities will be many and the results will be precious and permanent.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

THE CRADLE IS THE POWER. (203)

In every household where there is a cradle, the cradle is the power. The hush of one's soul by the side of the cradle is like the hush of worship. God seems very near. The new life there is a divine wonder. The sleeping infant there is the latest miracle from the creative hand of God. It is an incarnation of an immortal soul started on an immortal life. At no spot on earth do so many questions get started as at the cradle. An infant is a bundle of mysteries; a bundle of interrogation points; a bundle of problems. A manifold life is wrapped up in it. It is gifted and dowered with marvelous faculties and forces which carry in them sublime possibilities. A babe is an interesting thing because it is the incarnation of an immortal soul and carries in it an eternity. The little crib, out of which looks the chubby face, is the fullest thing in the world. It is the grandest blessing possessed by the human race. Whose heart has infancy ever injured? Nay, rather let me ask, into the tissue of whose life has it not woven some golden thread or some ray of joy or some masterful purpose or some heavenly tie? Everywhere it begets love and trust, humility and pureness of motive and all the graces which go to make up fitness for the Kingdom of God.

Every cradle contains wonders, destinies and histories and condensed potentialities in a small package. This is especially true of the cradle of Bethlehem, which is the cradle of cradles. If it had perished, Christendom would have perished with it. And the Kingdom of God would never have obtained a foothold on earth.

This cradle is the cradle among all cradles. It is the incarnation of all incarnations. Never was so much compressed into so small a compass as was compressed into the swaddling bands that held the Child of Bethlehem.

ACCOUNT FOR THE CHRIST. (204)

It is easy to account for most men. They are born of the influences and tendencies which precede them. For example, the wild robber spirit of the East makes possible an Alexander. The devotion of a nation to the glories of war necessitates a Napoleon. The intellectual activity of the sixteenth century culminates logically in a Shakespeare. And the restless reaching of the race after freedom of conscience and after civic rights naturally makes men like the Adamsses and Jeffersons and Patrick Henry and George Washington. But no law of heredity, or conjunction of circumstances, accounts for Christ. Uncounted millions have been born, but the skies have been silent. Great heroes have appeared, philosophers have come upon the stage of being and the master musicians have poured the notes of joy into the air of the earth, patriots have lived to bless their nations and philanthropists have reached out their hands to help the whole world; but never once at their coming have

the angels gathered above their birth place and turned midnight into glory, and silence into song.

CHRIST BEFORE CHRISTMAS. (205)

Christmas is the celebration of the advent of Christ into our world by a human birth. I do not mean that Christmas marks the beginning of Christ. No, Christ existed before Christmas and exerted a mighty influence, and as an ideal, and as a prophecy; hence. Before Christmas He existed as a and as such He was the most real and the most influential personage that walked the pages of the Old Testament. Christ was there in the sacred volume of the covenant people of God. Nothing essential was omitted. So fully portrayed was He, and so vividly, that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, and saw it; and Moses esteemed His reproaches as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and cast his lot with the people of God for His sake. The men of antiquity made Him their model and put themselves under His inspiration, and as a result there came into being the Patriarchs, and the Prophets, and the Heroes, who make up the Hebrew Bible.

Such was Christ before Christmas. On Christmas He stepped out of the book and became the babe of Bethlehem. He stepped out of a promise and became a fulfillment. He stepped out of a prophecy and became history. He stepped out of an ideal and became a real life. These are the things which we celebrate when we keep Christmas. We keep Christmas that these things may become more real to us; that our faith may be renewed and increased; that Christ may be freshened to us; that His religion may be made a new religion, and that we may have a new joy and a new love and be made new Christians, Christians of a better brand.

(206)

THE RESULTS OF CHRIST'S LIVING.

"I love to read and reread the Gospel story of the Master. There is a charm in everything He did and said. The grand way in which He died thrills me. It is the mission of Christmas to unroll anew this story of His, and to secure for it a new reading. In the beginning of the gospel we have before us a wonderful child surrounded with Advent miracles which create great hopes; and in the close of the gospel we have before us the magnificent man who has grown to a fulfillment of all these Advent hopes. There is a growing childhood in the home and there is a useful youthhood in the carpenter shop, giving dignity to labor; and there is in active manhood in public, teaching and leading and inspiring mankind; and there is a sacrificial death on the cross taking away the sins of the world.

"As a result we have the greatest words that have ever secured for themselves a golden utterance. Such words as the sermon on the mount; the beatitudes; the Golden Rule; the Lord's Prayer; the doctrines of the Divine

Fatherhood and the universal brotherhood, and the life immortal.

"As a result we have the greatest character ever built by man—a character that needs no improvement. The Master stands forth and asks for a dispassionate investigation: 'Which of you convicted me of sin; or the absence of taste; or the lack of tact, or ill-timed perception, or partial judgment, or want of balance?'"

"As a result we have the Master Himself, the greatest personality ever developed. He concludes His earthly career as 'the anointed.' He Himself is greater than anything He ever said, or did. If God Himself should become man He would be just such an one as Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, was.

CHRIST REPRODUCES HIMSELF. (207)

Given the Christ is not this what we should expect: That He will reproduce Himself in others, and in them live over again? It is the most natural thing in the world that Jesus Christ should be born in the souls of men, for He has that in Him which fascinates men, and lays hold of men, and controls men. How was it with the men who were with Him; and with the men who lived in the ages next to His age? Did they not leave all and follow Him, and that with the glow of enthusiasm which belongs to an heroic friendship. Paul explains himself by the birth of Christ in His soul, and this fact of the Divine soul-birth he did all in his power to make universal.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM. (208)

Christ is not only an historic fact; and a life in a regenerated soul; He is also a grand civilization. His gospel is an organized kingdom with a universal destiny. There was nothing that so occupied the thoughts of the Master, when He was here, as His kingdom. You can see His kingdom, with its future greatness, in the wonders which crowd around His cradle. The glory-light, which turned night into day, was a declaration that the Light of His Life would illuminate the world. The singing of the legions of God was a proclamation that all music should be His, and that He would build His throne in the midst of a world of praise. The worship of the Magi was a prophecy that some day all learning would bow before Him, and that all science and art and wisdom would do Him homage.

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TWO CHRISTMAS LEGENDS.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE. (209)

On Christmas Eve in 724 a little band was traveling through the great dark German forest, led by Winfried of England, called by the Romans Boniface. He is known in history as the Apostle of Germany. After nightfall and moonrise they come to an open space in which is a huge ancient oak. Before it is a great bon-fire and around this a crowd of people facing the oak. All are dressed in white, women, warriors, old men and little children. The old priest greets Winfried and his followers, and then says, "This is the death-night of Baldur the beautiful, the sun-god. Thor is grieved for Baldur, and angry because his people have forsaken his worship. Therefore he has sent defeat and famine and plague upon us. A costly offering must be given to appease his anger. Thor claims your dearest and noblest gift." Then, suddenly turning, he lays his hand on a slender boy, the eldest son of the chief, saying, "Bernhard, wilt thou go to Valhalla with a message to Thor?" The child answers, "Yes, if my father bids; is it far?" "Yes," said the priest, "but thou art brave, and thou must journey in darkness for a little." Then he blindfolds the child and bids him kneel by a broad stone before the fire. The priest lifts the black hammer of Thor and swings it high over the child. But before it falls, Winfried's heavy staff is thrust forward and the black stone strikes the rock altar, breaking it in twain. The daring deed raises a clamor of conflicting cries, but the chief commands silence and asks the stranger to speak. Winfried opens a roll of parchment and reads a letter from the great Bishop of Rome to the people of the forest, commanding them to listen to the words of Boniface and to build a church wherein to pray to the Almighty King of Heaven. "What," said the chief, "is the word thou bringest from the Almighty?" "This," replied Winfried, "not a drop of blood shall fall tonight; but the great shadow of the tree which hides the light of heaven shall be swept away. This is the birthnight of the white Christ—Thor is dead—can he protect his oak?" And Winfried and one of his followers seized axes and felled the oak. "Here," cried Winfried, "is wood for your chapel." Then, turning towards a slender young fir-tree, he added, "There is a tree with no stain of blood on it—that shall be the sign of your new worship." So they carried the tree of the Christ-child to the chieftain's hall and hung lights among the branches, and Winfried stood beside it and told the story of the babe and the shepherds, and of the angels and their song.—From Henry Van Dyke's classic, "The First Christmas Tree."

WHERE LOVE IS, THERE GOD IS ALSO. (210)

The shoemaker, Martin Avdyéitch, lived and worked in a little basement room with one window, through which he could see the feet of the passers-by. His wife and son were dead, and he lived in loneliness and despair.

From this he was roused by a friend who told him to live for God. So he began to read the Testament. One night he read of the feast of Simon the Pharisee, who failed to receive Jesus with the customary hospitality, and Martuin laid his spectacles down and thought, "The Pharisee must have been like me; if the Lord had been my guest should I have done the same way?" And Martuin rested his head upon his arms. Suddenly he heard the words, "Martuin, look tomorrow on the street—I am coming!" Martuin looked around, but the room was empty. The next day as he worked he kept glancing out of the window. One after another passed; then a man in an old pair of laced felt boots began to shovel the snow before the window. Martuin said to himself, "I must be growing crazy. Stepanuitch is shoveling snow, and I imagine the Christ is coming to see me." But he looks out again and sees Stepanuitch leaning weakly against the wall. He opens the door and asks Stepanuitch to come in and warm himself, and offers him a cup of tea. While Martuin drinks his own tea, he glances occasionally out of the window. "Are you expecting anyone?" asks his guest. "I don't know; I read of Christ's visit to the Pharisee, and just as I fell asleep last night I heard a voice, 'Watch, I shall come tomorrow.'" And he gave Stepanuitch some more tea. After Stepanuitch had departed, Martuin sat down to work but he still looked out of the window. At last a woman with wooden shoes passes slowly. Pressing his face to the window, he sees that she is poorly clad and is carrying a crying child. He asks her to come in and warm herself. He gives her some food, and an old coat to wrap the child in, and a twenty-kopek piece to redeem her shawl which was pawned. Then Martuin returns to work. By-and-by an apple-woman passes with some apples in a basket and a bag of chips on her shoulder. A ragged urchin grabs an apple, but the woman sees it and seizes him by the hair. Martuin runs out; the boy denies the theft and the woman threatens to call the police. Martuin persuades the boy to confess and the woman to release him, saying that God has commanded us to forgive as we would be forgiven. At last they depart, the boy helping the woman to carry the bag. Martuin returns to his room, lights a lamp and takes down the gospels. As he opens the book, he hears a sound of footsteps behind him. A voice seems to say in his ear, "Ah! Martuin, did you not know me?" "Oh! who?" stammers Martuin. "Me!" And then Stepanuitch appears, and the woman with her child, and the apple-woman and the boy—each in turn, says, "It is I!" smiles and vanishes. Martuin turns to the open gospel and reads, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." And Martuin understands that his dream was true, that his Saviour has come and he has welcomed him.—From Tolstoi's "Gospel Stories."

Enclose a Coupon in Every Letter

and you may easily be one of three men the Current Anecdotes sends to Palestine on the 1905 Cook Cruise, at our expense.

GOOD NEWS TO MEN.

THE THREE WISE MEN. (211)

"In the appearance of those men (the three wise men) in Bethlehem at the time of the birth of Jesus, there was something singularly significant," writes Rev. Amory H. Bradford, D. D. "They represented the long aspiration and hunger of the nations. Something more than curiosity caused their journey. The Messianic expectation had pervaded the East and probably had much to do with their presence. The immediate occasion of their visit may have been the wish to pay reverence to earthly Royalty, but more probably it was inspired by what has been beautifully called 'the desire of all nations.' The ideals of the past had failed, and spiritual and prophetic souls among many peoples were looking for some new and better faith. The longing for some new and brighter light on human life's mystery was intense and universal. The melancholy of 'the seekers after God,' like Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, was typical of a long-continued and widely prevailing sadness which was mixed with a dim yet prophetic anticipation. The wise men came out of nations from which in later times many were to do homage to Jesus as King in the realm of the Spirit. They were the precursors of the untold millions who were to find in Him 'the desire of all nations,' as was prophesied by the prophet: 'And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.'"

A PRESENT, PLUS THOUGHT. (212)

All men, says an old proverb, give gifts; but few men give pleasure with their gifts.

A poor widow to whom Queen Victoria had granted a pension wished to express her gratitude and loyalty. But what could she give that the empress of one-fourth of the world would value?

She was an expert amateur photographer, and it occurred to her to take pictures of all the places visited by the Queen when she was a young wife with Prince Albert. The little volume was finished, simply bound, and sent to Windsor Castle, and the Queen was said to keep it among her chief treasures.

THE CHILD KING. (213)

When Columbus discovered America he merely touched a few islands. The great continent he never saw. And the king and people who praised him did not know a thousandth part of the great discovery he had made. Beyond the little islands that Columbus saw lay America, with its great rivers and mountains and prairies, its Niagara and Yellowstone and Yosemite. Neither the wise men nor the shepherds dreamed of the empire over which that little Child-king in the Bethlehem manger was to rule through the ages; the great men that he was to inspire; the institutions and schools and colleges and nations that were to spread his fame. The blessed song was to all people.—Bishop Vincent.

ONE TIMES ONE IS ONE

or God's Estimate of the Individual.

FREDERICK MORELLE.

If I were eloquent I would take Matt. 12:1, 13:46, 7:22, and Luke 4:25-27 for texts and preach a sermon with the above title.

Then I would use the following illustration which, though questioned, has been verified by that most reliable of travel-authors, George Kennan:

ONLY ONE SAVED AT ST. PIERRE. (215)

At the time of the destruction of St. Pierre there was a negro named Auguste Ciparis, who was confined in a dungeon of the St. Pierre jail. On the morning of May 8, it suddenly became dark; then hot air and fine ashes came in through the door grating, the only opening in the cell, and burned him severely. He called for help in vain. He lay groaning with pain for four days, when he heard voices and again called for help. Two negroes who were exploring the ruins heard his cries, forced open the door, and rescued the only survivor of the St. Pierre disaster. Then this:

"WE LACK ONLY ONE MAN." (216)

The "City of Rome" was in mid-ocean, when some of the passengers on deck proposed a "tug of war," in which two picked sides were to contest by pulling at the ends of a long rope. First it was Americans against all other nationalities. In this the Colonel took part, tying one end of the rope around his body; the other end was tied around a big Israelite who was visiting England to buy goods.

Then the single men challenged the married men. Twenty single men were soon secured; and at last as many save one among the benedicts. A gentleman named Masters, who was connected with the New York Tribune, was seated upon the upper deck, showing some friends pictures of his wife and children whom he had left at home. Some one said to him, "We only lack one man. Won't you come with us?"

Mr. Masters immediately put the pictures into his pocket and sprang to the rope which he tied around his stalwart form, and all the others took their places.

"All ready?" said the starter.

"Let her go," replied all.

It was a desperate struggle. The pulling had lasted for ten minutes and neither side seemed to get the better of the other, when Masters shouted:

"We've played long enough, boys; now for a long pull and a pull altogether for the folks we left at home!"

For a moment the fifty stalwart men stood still in their desperate test of strength; then the single men weakened and the benedicts swept them off their feet amid the hurrahs of the hundreds who crowded the deck.

Mr. Masters untied the rope from his body and smiled in response to numerous congratulations. It was noticed, however, that his face was deathly pale, an expression of pain upon his countenance. He bent

lower and lower, and finally fell as friends sprang to his assistance. He was carried into the ship surgeon's office, where he died almost immediately. When the "Rome" reached Glasgow, the body was embalmed and returned on the ship to his bereaved family in Orange, N. J.—Col. Hadley in his "Blue Badge of Courage." And then this:

THE ONE LITTLE MONK. (217)

The catastrophe at Martinique recalls the story of the clock in the old church at Amatitlan, in Guatemala.

Nearly three hundred years ago the Jesuit fathers built a church and taught the Indians the arts of peace and the love of God. In the tower of the church was a clock which struck the hours, and images of white frocked priests came out of the little door in the clock in numbers to correspond with the hour; when one o'clock struck, one little white priest would come out and stand until relieved by two of his brethren when two o'clock struck.

For many years these little priests, watching their hours, stood looking out over the city. Then one day a great earthquake came and almost destroyed the city. The church still stood, but the clock tower leaned to one side, and the clock stopped. The hands pointed to a little after one o'clock. The figure of the one white priest that was out never went back and no others came to relieve him.

Then, after nearly eighty years, another earthquake came. It was not a serious one; but there was a great commotion in the town and all the people rushed to the plaza in front of the church, and there they stood and wondered, for the clock in the tower was running. It had just struck the hour of two, and two little figures had come forth. But three old people in all the city had ever seen those two little figures before, or ever heard that silver bell strike two. After the lapse of nearly a century, the clock that had been stopped by one earthquake had been started by another. No one there knew how to regulate the little images that marked the hours; there was one who dared to wind the clock and it ran, but ever after that clock was a law unto itself. At ten it would strike two, and two little figures would come out; at eleven three would come and stand their appointed hour; and so it runs in that old town today.

When I was there, five years ago, I asked the sexton why they did not set the clock right. He crossed himself as though I proposed a sacrilege and answered: "Oh, Signor, who would dare to tamper with it? If one should touch it, it might stop, and then we might wait a hundred years before another earthquake would start it."—From the Saturday Evening Post.

And notwithstanding God's word, putting His emphasis on the one, we try to impress the multitude; and the individual not satisfied with the plain word, stands like the little monk before the clock waiting for an earthquake of a special revelation, or a revival, to move him.

FROM NATURE AND SCIENCE.

Some Observations from "The Bird-Lover," by W. B. D. SCOTT. Published by The Outlook Co., New York.

ASTRONOMER AND BIRD LOVER. (218)

A naturalist who had a special knowledge of bird-life, after many invitations, once visited the observatory of an astronomer, feeling certain that they had no common interests. Before he left he turned the telescope upon the full moon which had just risen. Presently he became excited as he saw a small black object cross his field of vision at a great distance. His trained eye recognized that he had seen a song-bird fly at night, a fact which had never been recorded before. Asking the astronomer if he had ever seen birds silhouetted against the moon before, he replied, "I have seen them for forty years."

Men often think that there is no common interest between their life, their business and their pleasures and the spiritual life. In it they might discover a strength applicable to daily life that would be as great a discovery as that of the naturalist.

HE WHO WILLS SHALL KNOW. (219)

A gentleman who was connected with one of the large banks in lower New York, was extremely fond of horses. His daily routine of work took him every day over a regular route from the bank to Twenty-third street. This continued for some seven or eight years. He said that during that time he became so familiar with the horse population of the district, that he individualized the horses, recognizing a new comer and missing a familiar one if it disappeared. This was the result of an unusual interest, working under disadvantageous circumstances.

OVERCOMING EVIL. (220)

For many years the sugar-planters of Jamaica suffered greatly from the depredations of rats. Such havoc did these rodents make on the sugar-estates, that the loss was about thirty per cent. of the entire crop. Many efforts were made to overcome the evil, but in vain. At last a planter brought, in 1872, nine mongooses from India and liberated them on his estate. This creature preys upon the eggs and young of most animals. They increased rapidly and soon effected the destruction of the sugar-cane rat, then other food supplies were necessary. Twenty years later the results were these: ground-building birds, such as quail, guinea-fowl, and doves were nearly or wholly exterminated. Snakes had been annihilated, and lizards were rare. This meant that the insect-eating animals were nearly destroyed; hence there has been a marked increase in the insects—always considered great pests by the islanders. The grass tick has so increased that the industry of cattle and sheep raising has been practically destroyed.

In applying so-called rational remedies to evils of the day, let us be careful not to introduce the mongoose.

SERMON SUGGESTIONS IN ART.

A picture in the Dresden art gallery has been called by many an artist "the most beautiful picture in the world." It shows Mary of Nazareth with a child in her arms among the clouds coming swiftly down towards the spectator, as is shown by the drapery flowing back from her head and shoulder, and the swaying folds of her robe. On her right kneels the aged St. Sixtus in adoration, and on the left the youthful Barbara. Two heavy curtains looped carelessly on either side have apparently just been parted, making an open way for the Madonna to bring her Divine Son to the service of humanity, a suggestion of a sudden revelation of a hitherto concealed mystery. In the foreground are two careless, indifferent little cherubs representing the attitude of humanity.



"The Sistine Madonna," by Raphael.

The history of the Sistine Madonna is interesting and suggestive—Raphael painted it about 1518, as an altar-piece for the Benedictine monks, "the black friars of San Sisto," the finest work of his genius for an obscure Italian church at Piacenza. In 1753 the unappreciative monks sold the picture to the Elector of Saxony, Augustus III, for 60,000 florins, and it was moved to Dresden. The picture was different from the accepted canons of German art at that time, and much criticism was bestowed upon the elector for his useless expenditure of money. A hundred and fifty years have passed, and the Madonna and Christ-child of San Sisto are "the most beautiful picture in the world."

Following is Amory H. Bradford's "Messages of the Masters":

"On the canvas of Raphael are a mother and

child, such as no other artist ever painted: the woman is the child's mother, and yet the child seems not her child. The peculiarities of her race have left no impress on Him. He is unlike everything by which He is surrounded. You might put Mary and Jesus down in Rome, in Paris, in Britain, among African savages, among South Sea Islanders: and everywhere the mother would be among strangers, and everywhere the Child would be perfectly at home. This is not true of any other of the world's great teachers. Buddha was a Hindu; his views of life were the same as those of the elder religion in India; he was a genuine reformer; yet he appeals not to the world, but to his own and kindred peoples. Mahomet was an Arab, and all his utterances show his nationality; Zoroaster was a Persian, and his teachings are so distinctly national that they have almost died from among men; Moses was the great Hebrew, and he, while now and then suggesting the larger spiritual kingdom which is to come, was, after all, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. * * * * *

There stands the Mother, and there, in her arms, is the Child whose mysterious eyes read the far-away depths of the future. Was that child the offspring of Jewish parents alone, or was He the son of God? I have pondered that question long and earnestly; I have felt the force of the arguments against the divine origin of Jesus; but each day that I live and study the lessons which He taught and the life which He lived: each day that I see how those lessons and that life are leading all the nations more and more swiftly toward the goal of history—the time when love shall rule on earth as now it rules in heaven—only deepens the conviction that the only explanation of the character of Jesus, and of the change which He is working in the world, is contained in the faith that the Son of Man is the Son of God, and that the child of Mary is the Lord of Glory."

QUOTABLE POETRY.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

It chanced upon the merry, merry Christmas Eve,
I went sighing past the church across the moorland dreary—
"Oh! never sin and want and woe this earth will leave,
And the bells but mock the wailing sounds they sing so cheery.
How long, O Lord, how long before Thou come again?
Still in cellar and in garret and on moorland dreary
The orphans mourn, and widows weep, and poor men toil in vain,
Till earth is sick of hope deferred, though Christmas bells be cheery."

Then arose a joyous clamour from the wild fowl on the mere,
Beneath the stars, across the snow, like clear bells ringing,
And a voice within cried: "Listen! Christmas carols even here!

Tho' thou be dumb, yet o'er their work the stars and snows are singing.
Blind! I live, I love, I reign; and all the nations through
With the thunder of My judgments even now are ringing;
Do thou fulfill thy work but as yon wild fowl do,
Thou wilt heed no less the wailing, yet hear through it angels singing."
—Charles Kingsley.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

The earth has grown old with its burden of care,
But at Christmas it always is young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the air,
When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming tonight!
On the snowflakes which cover thy sod.
The feet of the Christ-child fall gentle and white,
And the voice of the Christ-child tells out with delight
That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and poor,
The voice of the Christ-child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer open the door
Of a hope that he dared not to dream of before,
With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest may walk in the field
Where the feet of the Holiest have trod;
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed,
That mankind are the children of God.
—Bishop Brooks.

WHY CHRISTMAS COMES.

Luke 2:10.

Hang up the holly and the mistletoe,
Build up the fires and let them redly glow,
Set out good cheer in all your happy homes,
For this is why the Christmas yearly comes.

Renew old friendships, and forgive all wrongs,
For loving-kindness to the time belongs;
Be generous to the poor and needy ones,
For this is why the blessed Christmas comes.

GOOD THINGS.

In addition to announcements on page 160 of the good things in store for Current Anecdotes readers the coming year, you will be pleased to know that David James Burrell, of the Marble Collegiate Church, N. Y., will contribute a rare selection of sermon illustrations, and in an early number we will present a sermon by Henry Van Dyke.

HOMILETIC DEPARTMENT.

GIST OF RECENT SERMONS BY GREAT PREACHERS.

Prepared by G. B. F. HALLOCK, D. D., Author of "The Homiletic Year."

WIRELESS MESSAGES OF GOD.

Text—"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Corinthians 2: 14. ✓

A great principle is here laid down which governs in the universal realms of truth, to wit: The principle of mutual adjustment. If you strike a tuning fork which is keyed to middle C it will awaken a response in another if keyed to the same pitch, but not otherwise. This is the basic fact in wireless telegraphy. On Cape Cod there is a transmitting station, consisting of four steel towers with a bunch of wires suspended from the top and meeting at a common point like an inverted cone. If the power be applied to the apex of this cone, this wire begins to tremble; and this current, oscillating at the rate of say 999,000 vibrations per second, creates a series of corresponding vibrations in the surrounding ether; just as a stone cast into a pond sends out concentric circles of water. This ether wave speeds outward with incalculable rapidity in search of its receiver. Now, there is such a receiver at Pol Dhu, in Cornwall, and the wires at Pol Dhu are precisely attuned to the transmitter, that is, adjusted to an oscillation of 999,000 per second, so that the message sent from the station at Cape Cod meets no response until it finds its sympathetic station at Pol Dhu, and this welcomes it.

The system of wireless telegraphy which is justly accredited to Marconi is not an invention, but a discovery. He has simply lighted up a process which has been going on perpetually in space. The sun, as the great source and center of energy in our solar universe, is constantly sending out messages of light. It is a scientifically demonstrated fact that a beam of light is simply an electric message; that is, the vibration of ether. And here the principle holds that no message can be received except by some object which is sympathetically attuned to welcome it. Let us suppose, as Professor Pupin suggests, that a beam of light intended to convey the color red is sent out from the sun. It goes forth representing a certain number of ether waves per second and speeds through space until it reaches the earth; and here, intent upon its eager quest, it passes without pausing through all the meadows, since no grass blade is adjusted to receive it; passes over all gardens, no daisy or buttercup, no mignonette or heliotrope being disposed to welcome it, until it finds a rose; and here it pauses and finds welcome, because the rose has been precisely co-ordinated with it.

Let us go a little farther now, and we shall find a spiritual analogy. For this process, which has been discovered to be so prevalent in nature, has infinite field and scope of operation in the province of spiritual things. God, as the great transmitter of truth, bears to the spiritual world a relation corresponding with

that of the sun in the natural world. Let us assume that there is a God, and that we are created in His image and after His likeness; it follows, as an inevitable conclusion, that He will sometime reveal Himself to His children and hold converse with them. But here is the application of the principle referred to: The man who would bear the wireless message of God must himself be attuned, or adjusted to the nature and character of God.

I. Let us begin with nature, for this is the universal medium through which God communicates with the children of men. Now there are some who look through nature to nature's God and hear Him speaking in everything about them, as it is written, "There are so many voices and none of them is without signification." Such persons, though they dwell in the desert of Midian, find "every common bush afire with God." At night the heavens declare His glory to them and the firmament showeth His handiwork. But there are others who hear no voices, and see nothing that is not visible to fleshy eyes. Whence this difference? It arises from the fact that some souls are sympathetic with God and others are not.

It is the misfortune of all misfortunes to be thus bond-slaves to the five senses; to see nothing beyond the range of physical vision and the circumscription of the finger tips. This is to be agnostics, indeed; to have no clairvoyance, no spiritual apprehension, no second sight, no faith. It is an eternal and immeasurable calamity to stand in the midst of a universe where the ether is vibrant with messages of truth and be so deeply absorbed in our little plans and pursuits and "physical sciences" that we hear no voice of God.

II. Let us turn now to the Scriptures which claim to be a divine revelation. There is an attempt in some quarters to reduce them to the level of other literature, and those who approach them in this attitude will find precisely what they find in other books and no more. Here, as elsewhere, we find what we are looking for, and hear what we are listening for. The mere student of literature finds in the Bible myths and parables, songs and chronicles of surpassing beauty, but there are others who listen as at divine oracles and hear the very voice of God.

How are we to account for this difference of estimate as to the spiritual value and integrity of the Scriptures? It is due, as before, to a difference of relation with God. In some cases men hold themselves in readiness to hear, as Samuel did in the early watch of the morning, when in answer to the heavenly voice he said: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." In other cases they stand in a critical or skeptical attitude, as Theodore Parker did when he remarked: "I am not willing to receive this statement upon the authority of any such person as God." There is nothing in the world that can so destroy the receptivity of the soul as the pride of worldly wisdom. No man can hear a heavenly

message who is not instantly willing to admit that God is wiser than he.

III. And at this point, and again, we discover why Christ is so often rejected as the incarnate "Word." There are multitudes who regard Him as chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, but there are many others who see in Him nothing but "a root out of dry ground, who hath no form or comeliness that they should receive Him."

Why this wide difference of view? It is due to the same difference in receptivity. There are some who profoundly feel the need of Christ; they welcome the message because they were waiting for it. Others, like Nathanael, cry, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" And prejudice must be overcome before they can receive Him. Thus it has come to pass that some who have been distinguished for their attainments in certain provinces of knowledge have been wholly blind on the Godward side. One cannot forget how Charles Darwin, after spending his life in experimenting along the lines of physical science, died lamenting that his spiritual nature had been starved.

IV. And the principle referred to will account also for the fact that the Holy Ghost is nothing to many men. And there is more skepticism at this point, I believe, than anywhere else in these days. We are living under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. He is now the executive of God's kingdom on earth; and those who are in the kingdom have to do officially with Him. Is the Holy Spirit the personal director of our life and service, or is He not "He" at all, but merely "it"? If He sustains the former relation to us, it is because our souls are in harmony with His great purposes concerning us and adjusted to receive communications from Him. In this case, we stand as Elijah did on Horeb, his face wrapped in his mantle, while he harkened to the "still small Voice." And living thus we follow His guidance, as did Abraham on his journey from Ur of the Chaldees along the windings of the Great River, ever heeding the direction of the Voice, pitching his tent or moving on as the Spirit bade him.

In view of such considerations is it not apparent that the soul is blind and deaf to heavenly visions and revelations, unless it is attuned to them? And what solemn significance there is in the words of Jesus: "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." O, for the hearing ear and the understanding heart! —Rev. David James Burrell, D. D.

SEALED ORDERS.

Text—"The hidden man of the heart, which, in the sight of God, is of great price."—1 Peter 3: 4.

In the East Indies they told us of an island south of Sumatra where was found the wreck of an English man of war, from which they never heard as it rounded the Cape many years before. Many an English home has been shadowed in mourning, many a widow has donned those weeds and worn them faithfully through a hard, laboring life. Many a mother has wept for her child, and wondered where he went down in the sea, or whether he had starved to death on some desert island,

or whether he might not yet be living in some barren wilderness on berries. They found amid that wreck the chests still complete, though buried for a long time in the sand. When they burst them open, they found the record of the ship's crew, all of the log of the vessel, and they found there a great envelope containing the "sealed orders" for the ship. The sealed orders directed that as soon as they reached Cape Colony the ship should return immediately to St. Helena. In the great plan of the English campaign at that time against the French they needed that vessel at St. Helena, and yet it would not do to let the people on board know anything of the destination until they reached Cape Colony. They desired to deceive the enemy. This envelope, for reasons unknown, had never been opened, and the ship had gone down off the coast of Sumatra, and the naval department in England was left in confusion. The mystery has never been explained, how that vessel ever went in the direction it did go, why it should be found at last upon that shore, all hands washed to death in that sea, and why those sealed orders given to the commander of the ship when he departed from London were not opened, for the seal was not broken. The nation's loss, the mourning that cannot be described, came because the sealed orders had never been opened.

Friends, you and I are on the sea. We have, by the providence of God, been sent to a known destination. But we have been given sealed orders, and we are to open those orders when we reach a certain point in life's history. Many of us have passed that point long ago, and have gone our own reckless way, thinking that we knew better than the sealed orders, or we have forgotten, or for some reason, excuse or error, we have not opened the sealed orders, and we are sailing at random on the sea. What coast we shall strike we know not, what the wrecks are in our path we cannot see, what cyclones shall wreck us, what waves shall overwhelm us, what earthquakes break us, we do not know. We are sailing along now without orders, and the sealed orders are still hidden in our chests. For when this morning I took the Greek Testament and read this verse, "The hidden man of the heart," I was surprised to find that the apostle was intending to convey to those good women the idea that in every person's life there are these sealed orders, these hidden directions, which each person has been given for his conscientious guide.

He did in effect say to them, "Be in subjection, comply with the law. Do what you agreed to do. If you agreed to be a man's wife and servant when you married him, be one. Do not find fault with that; but remember that in every life, in every heart, there are sealed orders of God, and that they are to be consulted by you."

Out there beyond St. Louis they will show you the old cabin of General Grant. General Grant was cutting wood and carting it into St. Louis. There was a plum tree growing in one corner of the lot on which the cottage stood, and a number of wide spreading trees, of various sorts, shaded it. Mrs. Grant thought it unfair that the plum tree should

have so little sun, and she urged General Grant to cut it down and let the sunlight in on the plum tree, and the next year the plum tree blossomed and bore the most luscious plums. It had never borne any fruit before. If you want General Grant's life illustrated you will find it in the tree. There he was buried from active public life, there in that land, unknown and unnoticed, carting wood and selling it to the people who did not pay him. But when the war came God let the light in on Gen. Grant and he blossomed forth and bore the fruits of greatness that were there so long concealed.

As I came through Buffalo yesterday and looked at the wreck of that great factory near there, there were stones and brick and iron all piled together in every conceivable contortion and the exploded boiler was away out there in the field. From that they had taken the wreck of men as well as the wrecks of timber, and as I looked upon that ruin I thought how like human life that seems. Sin has come in and exploded; men have been driven hither and yon, and there is ruin and wreck all around, and a confusion that we cannot understand. Each one has had his own design, and had his own place in the world, and yet wickedness and sin, wrong, evil and the devil have come in and destroyed until the world seems to lie in such awful ruin. But those wonderful words of Whittier came in to comfort me: "Ah well for us some sweet hope lies." Yes, somewhere we shall understand. In the future we shall know as we are known. That is why heaven becomes so dear.

The apostle was saying to these poor women in subjection to their husbands, remember how the heart, not the clothing, decides the happiness. Outward circumstances do not determine salvation. We are not the creatures of circumstances. Your own heart urges you to seek salvation and eternal life. Because the time will come when all will be made straight, when the dead will come to life. For in heaven, if we do not find out here, we can yet open our sealed orders and begin our lives once more. Blessed be the name of the Savior who has not left us without the witness, hidden from the world in our own hearts, that each may clearly know the way to his better self.—Rev. Russell H. Conwell, D. D.

THE PALMISTRY OF THE SAINTS.

Text—"All his saints are in thy hand."—Deut. 33: 3. ✓

The message which I wish specially to bring to you at this time is the lessons suggested by the figure of the hand, which is used in the Bible so commonly in reference to the relation of God and Christ to the Christian.

I. The first thought is that of security. The hand of God is a safe place for those who trust Him. Christ declared to His disciples that no one would ever be able to snatch them out of His hand. We may take ourselves, by our own willfulness and sin, beyond the reach of the Divine protection, and bring upon ourselves disaster and ruin. But

no one else can do it so long as we submit ourselves to God. God's great promises, with which the Bible is filled, He will never fail to keep, if we fulfill our part of the conditions.

The story is told of a simple old man, seventy-four years of age, who had to work very hard for a living but who found great comfort in his Bible. The minister called to see him one day in his little home and found him held fast to his chair with rheumatism, but the old man had his great big family Bible open before him, and with horn spectacles on, and with his horny fingers tracing out one by one the words of the sacred Book. The preacher went up to him, and, looking over his shoulder at the Book noticed some writing in the margin of the great Bible.

On examining more carefully he found that the old man had written one word continually in the margin. It was the word "Proved." He looked along and found it had a regular system. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.—"Proved." "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."—"Proved."—"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—"Proved."—"Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."—"Proved."—"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief."—"Proved." What a new Bible it would be to us if we were to take the same plan and write our own experience between the lines. How it would illuminate our periods of depression, how it would banish the blues, and comfort our hearts, if we were constantly conscious that we are in God's hands, that the strong grip of His fingers are about us, that the kindly warmth of His palm holds us, and that no harm can come to us while we are there, and no one will be able to snatch us away from that safe refuge.

II. The same figure is used in the Bible to show us how God keeps us in constant remembrance. In Isaiah the Lord says in speaking of His people: "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." In that day it was a common practice to tattoo on the hands or arms tribal marks, and it was a common thing to brand in a cruel way some indication of ownership of a slave in the same way a western rancher brands his cattle.

But how tender is the illustration when God says to those who seek to do His will: "I have graven thee upon the palm of my hands." If He has graven the names of His people on His forehead other people might see but He would not; but He puts them on His hands where He can see them.

The hands are the expressive powers of the body; most of the orders that come from the brain for the safety and control of everyday life come to the hands. The hands are the seat of skill, strength, defence, and accomplishment. It is as though God said to us, all the skill of my infinite wisdom, all the power of my omnipotence, I put at your disposal, for I have graven your image on the palm of my hand, and no one shall ever be

(Continued on page 162.)

1903-4

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Vol. V.

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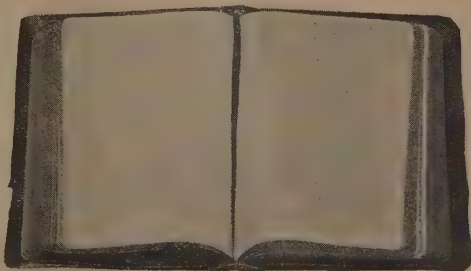
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(Continued from page 159.)

able to rub it out. The tenderness of this figure is beyond all our power to illustrate.

III. But there is a science of palmistry for us as well as for God. In that same book of Isaiah there is a wonderful paragraph which tells of God's graciousness and its results upon the people. "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel."

What is meant by subscribing with his hand unto the Lord is that same practice of engraving or tattooing on the hand. It was putting on the hand a statement of the fact that he was sacred to God. This makes our Christianity a sacred compact between God and man. I think there are some people that seem to act as though they felt that religion was a one sided affair. They are comforted and rejoiced so long as you talk to them about their being graven on the hand of God, and His loving care for them, but their joy departs when you point out that the necessary condition of such protection and love on God's part must be that their own hands must be set apart as sacred to God and His service. Yet there is no gospel that we need to preach so earnestly today as this.

IV. In the twenty-fourth Psalm, David inquires, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His Holy place?" And he answers it by giving as the very first condition, "He that hath clean hands." When Christ would prove to His disciples after His resurrection that He was beyond all doubt the same Jesus who had loved them so devoutly that He had been nailed to the cross in their stead, He spread out His palms before them and cried, "Behold my hands." There were the prints of the nails that had been driven through the palms of His hands when He was fastened to the cruel cross. How beautiful those hands seemed to the disciples, and what certain testimony they were to His love. So the supreme testimony that we can bear to God and Christ is the testimony of our hands.

Christ is crucified afresh when some man professes by his relation to the church and to Christianity that he himself is graven on the hand of God and yet proves by his conduct that Christ and God are not graven on his hand. It is not the preacher in the pulpit only that should have clean hands that will bear testimony to his integrity when he preaches the word of life to the congregation, but every man and woman who profess the name of Jesus must carry clean hands in their business and in their social and religious life, if they are to be helpful as witnesses for Christ.

The Christian's hand should be a hand like Christ's that allows its palm to be nailed to the cross rather than be faithless and disloyal to God. We should have Paul's spirit of devotion, who regarded the wounds made by

fighting with beasts as marks of honor in his service for Christ. The Christian hand should be like Christ's in helpfulness. The hand of Jesus was never too proud to take that of the leper; it was ever ready to make clay to anoint a blind man's eyes; it went forth willingly to give encouragement and help to the man that was in trouble and was friendless. We can fill our hands with earnest work as He did, keeping them loyally faithful to every true and good cause. We can stretch forth our hands to the man who is in need or trouble. We can raise them for the defence of the weak, and make their strength tell on the side of righteousness.—Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D. D.

DIVINE POWER HARNESSSED.

Text—"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthened me."—Phil. 4: 13. ✓

Our Saviour once said to His disciples, "Without me, ye can do nothing." I take this to be a warning to believers in all ages never to seek to do anything in their own strength alone, as if by their own authority, power or grace of life they could recover this world to the primeval beauty and glory of Paradise. Our text is a projection of this truth, for not only is it true that we can accomplish nothing permanently good or grandly immortal without Christ "who strengtheneth" us.

Now observe—

I. The superlative ability of the believer in Christ.

"I can do all things." This is a large claim. The Apostle does not say in this text as so many of us say when asked to perform some duty, "I will wait until a more opportune time, when, perhaps, I feel more like performing the duty required, or when I am in the right mood and tense of Christian duty and activity, when I have fewer causes for irritation than now, when matters in the church run to suit me, when things in general are more after my line of thinking than they are now, then I will act." No! No! But this, "I will arise now and do whatever is commanded." Less than this is disloyalty to Christ, treason to His government, and very troublesome and dangerous to the serenity and balance of Christian experience.

But instead of this noble expression of confidence, "I can do all things," how often do some people frame excuses and say something like this: "Oh, I cannot do this or that. I have no aptitude, no ability in that line. Oh, no; I cannot do what is asked of me in this instance." This latter conclusion affords a very common escape from the obligations and duties of the Christian life, and it is all a mistake, a sad mistake, a mischievous mistake.

Is there Christian work to be done in the city? Do we see sin, degradation and low cunning accomplishing a devastating work? Do we hear the cry of the heathen ringing in our ears; heathen in Africa, in the Orient, in the Isles of the Sea, in South America, and in the frozen regions of the north? Does civilization seem to be producing shoddy, sham and shame? Are our printing presses turning out more literature of a pernicious than of an inspiring kind? Are the problems thus

presented, or presented by any other array of startling and stirring questions, difficult of solution? Then I know of no solution for such, or similar problems, than that found in the calm, deliberate, invincible, consecrated, devout, Spirit-filled, confidence of our text, "I can do all things."

II. Our ability to do all things is not original with us, but is derived.

That is, the ability is not self-originated. It is, according to our text, "through Christ who strengtheneth me." In this the Apostle says what every one of you can say, whatever your station in life, whether rich or poor, whether learned or ignorant, whether employer or employee—"I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." In these words I discern an actual belief that Christ does strengthen.

I have been told that years ago Ole Bull was wandering through an American forest. In the midst of it was a hut, and in that hut a hermit, who had been a public character in New York, had soured on the world and had retired to sulk, as some foolish people do. Ole Bull pushed the door of the hut open and walked in. There sat the hermit in unkempt attire. A violin hung on the wall. Ole Bull pointing to it said: "What is that?" The hermit answered that it was his "fiddle." "You play, then?" was the next question. "Well, I reckon I do," said the old man, and added: "I got that fiddle thirty-five years ago in London." Ole Bull then asked the hermit to play. He took the violin from the wall and began. The instrument wailed "God Save the Queen," squeaked "My Country 'Tis of Thee," moaned "The Carnival of Venice." Then he lowered the violin with a self-satisfied air, and Ole Bull said: "Let me take it." He took it. He drew the bow across the strings and played. He played "God Save the Queen" till the birds singing in the treetops stopped to listen, till the winds paused, and the leaves of the trees ceased their rustle to listen. Then came "Home Sweet Home," till the hills of Norway arose to view in the violinist's mind, and the scenes in New York, its halls, streets and parks presented their panorama of reality to the mind of the banished politician. Oh, what is a violin? Nothing but wood and cat-gut, but in the hands of Ole Bull it is the master instrument of the century. And what are we? Feeble, infinite mortals in ourselves, but when our Saviour draws the bow of His love across our lives the music of redemption breaks forth. Angels stop to listen, and the universe throbs with sympathetic gladness.

Now, to exercise the power that ought to be exercised, to manifest the utility, the beauty, the industrial greatness that belong to those who believe the truth of this text, I assure you that it is necessary for every one of us to link our lives through a Mediator to God and to breathe by His inspiration, putting forth every endeavor through a strength and an omnipotent genius not our own. When you and I can say every morning of life, and at the commencement of every undertaking, "What I now attempt to do is not my doing, but is to be accomplished through a competent medium of power which strengthens me,"

then each one of us can labor without fret or friction and with some considerable and intelligent hope of successful accomplishment.

Oh, slay the demon of worry and fling his carcass away, for is not the longed for, looked for Mediator Jesus Christ? He is sufficient to help you do what you can never do yourself. Oh, consider Him the only Mediator between God and man—crucified, buried, risen, glorified, and the coming King, who in Himself joins life and life, power with power, heaven with earth, brings God to man and lifts man to God.

Oh, Christ is indeed above all, beyond all, yet necessary to all.

Once trust in Christ, once consecrate yourself and your all to Christ, and Christ is yours for time and eternity, to work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure, to work with you in securing for yourself and others all the substantial results of His redemption, and to work for you in cleaving a pathway of glory through azure fields of space. Gifted with the power of Christ, and crowned with a destiny that is Christ's alone to bestow, you can say, with all confidence, as in our text, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." With all the earnestness I have, I say, if only one half of the forty millions of Christians in the United States would awaken to the realization of this power and the blessing it carries with it, a year would not pass before we had won this world for Christ and had changed it into the garden of Immanuel's land.

To the believer and unbeliever this great truth is presented. It alone makes life worth living now, and the best preparation also for eternity. Would you be good? Would you do good? Would you face death with blessing? Would you rise from the dead to enjoy life forevermore? Would you escape the condemnation of judgment? Would you enjoy divine approval and blessing and welcome? Then, repent of sin, and rest with the sweet confidence of faith in Jesus Christ, who makes His strength perfect in human weakness and supplies all who trust Him with an ample equipment of omnipotent power.—Rev. E. Trumbull Lee, D. D.

REAL LIFE.

Text—"Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."—Galatians 2: 20. ✓

St. Paul is here telling secrets, unveiling hidden things. Beneath that knowledge of the facts and laws of physical life which we call science, there is another and a deeper knowledge of the true fountain of life which we call religion. Into this knowledge St. Paul leads us when he says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Life, as we see it with our outward eyes, is a play, an illusion, a masquerade. Underneath this wonderful masquerade are the real people. Among them two great mysteries are going on—two great realities, and only two—the mystery of death and the mystery of life.

I. Here under this masquerade are dying souls. It is appointed unto all men once to die. Everyone must come to the end of his figure, take his last step, and vanish. This is a truism. But this is not what I mean.

It is also appointed unto all men to die daily. There is a process of perishing which goes on at every moment through all the movement, action, exertion of life. This is also a truism. But this is not what I mean.

The truth that presses upon me is that there is an absorption, a sinking, a spending of the soul in this limited, perishing existence, a gradual losing of the soul, a secret dying of the soul, which is going on in the world all the time—and this is the real death. To have our affection, our controlling, inmost desire set on earthly things is to belong to them. To belong to them is to fade with them. Sin is the preference of the sensual to the spiritual. The preference becomes a habit, the habit a character, the character a destiny. To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

II. Life and peace—peace in life, and life in peace—that is the other great reality under the masquerade. This is the second great mystery that is going on in the world. The satisfaction of this want, the quenching of this thirst for immortality, the quickening of a new and more abundant life which is neither bound to, nor dependent upon, the vanishing unrealities of the masquerade of sense—this is the great, beautiful secret that St. Paul tells us in the text. This is indeed the secret of the New Testament. The sacred scripture of the Egyptians was called "The Book of the Dead." Our Scripture ought to be called "The Book of the Living." Its central message is that life and immortality are brought to light in Jesus.

Surely this is a mystery. But just as surely it is a reality. Inward, men and women are being renewed every day, while outward, men and women are perishing. Souls are being born again continually, not by the will of the flesh nor by the will of man, but by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever—which word is Christ.

Of this life Christ is the giver and the source.

III. If I should try to tell you how He does this I could but repeat the old story, and it would take forever. For it is as long and as varied as the wide and deep experience of humanity.

The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. "In the flesh;" that is the outward form of it. A human form, an actual form, an existence of present duties and labors and conflicts and sorrows and joys. That is the shell, the vessel in which it is contained. But the life itself, the secret inward spring of vitality comes from believing that Jesus loved me and gave Himself for me, and that He who held me in His heart and died for me on the cross is none other than the Son of God.

Don't you see how this faith quickens real life? Don't you see how it is life, new, heavenly, everlasting?

1. Surely there is nothing else in all the world so life-giving as the knowledge that we

are loved. This is what it means to see Jesus as our Saviour. It is to know that His love for us is so great that He died upon the cross to save us from our sins. He loved you and me personally. He died for you and me personally.

There was a prisoner in one of the dungeons at the time of the French Revolution who was much loved by many people. But there was one love which surpassed them all. It was the love of his father; and this was the proof of it. The two men bore the same name, and when the son's name was called among those who were to die, the father answered to it, and took his place, and went to the scaffold, and laid his head upon the block. The blade of the guillotine flashed; the head fell; the father died for the son he loved. That is what Christ has done for us. When we believe this we know what love means. When we know what love means we have the only real life.

2. But think what it means to know that this love which has done so much for us is the love of the Son of God. It sets the seal of eternity upon it. It brings the power of Almightiness into it. It lifts the sacrifice of Jesus, and lifts us with it, up into the very heart of God.

Come then, and let us testify to this hidden life, and renew it, and refresh it, in communion with Christ. In this world we must be either dying daily, or daily living in immortality; withering away in dreams or awakening to glorious realities; perishing with the sensual or surviving with the spiritual; vanquished or victorious. Let us not lose our life in the world, but let us find it in Christ. Let us come near to Him and touch Him and join ourselves to Him. Then be still for a moment—utterly still in silent faith—unless we feel the pulse of His love like the throbbing of our heart. Then go forth to live in the world—bravely, earnestly, happily—because we know that love is the real life, and the love of the Son of God in us is the real life that can never die.—Rev. Henry Van Dyke, D. D.

A PLEA FOR THE SIMPLE LIFE.

Text—"Take no thought saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your Heavenly Father knoweth."—Matthew 6:31, 32. ✓

Just 100 years ago, in 1803, William Wordsworth, the great English poet, then a young man and comparatively unknown, wrote a sonnet entitled "Plain Living and High Thinking."

The remarkable thing about these lines is that although describing the follies of 100 years ago, they are exactly applicable to the conditions of life today. What Wordsworth criticised so forcefully in 1803 is still prevalent in 1903. In spite of the vaunted progress of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding the enormous advance in every sphere of human activity, it is a sad commentary on our civilization that today we are just as much the slaves of vulgar ostentation as our fathers were when the last century still was young.

I need scarcely remind you how powerfully this same criticism of our over-elaborated life has been set forth in that remarkable little book by Charles Wagner, "The Simple Life." Like Wordsworth, Wagner sees in the elaboration and complexity of modern life not merely a menace to the stability of the state, but to the intellectual and spiritual life of the individuals who compose the state. The evil results of this over-elaborated mode of living, common even among the poor as well as the rich, are already with us. One does not require the vision of a seer to recognize them.

It is in the face of such conditions that the pulpit of today, if it be brave and true to its duty, is called upon to sound forth a warning note.

I. My first remark is an obvious inference. Plain living is an absolute condition of high thinking. Strenuous thinking cannot come from pampered living. There can be no life of worthy thought where existence is loaded down with the vulgarities of luxury. Thought, which is the life of the soul, not only deteriorates; it dies when we make the cares of the body be-all and the end of all our days. The two most illiterate classes in society today are the abject poor, who by necessity must think of the needs of the body, and, therefore, can think of nothing else; and the idle rich, who by choice devote every hour of the day to the trivial problem of what they shall eat and what they shall drink and wherewithal they shall be clothed.

II. What are some of the causes of this over-elaboration in material things of life?

Primarily, there is the passion for luxury itself. We are today essentially a luxurious race. The pitiful thing is that we are proud of it. We boast about our luxury as something that lifts us above other nations. You meet people, for example, who go abroad, and when they return what is the burden of their conversation? Not to tell you of beautiful scenes of nature which they have visited, but to complain that, having gone abroad confessedly for change, they did not find anything exactly the same and just as comfortable as at their own fireside. They criticise the temperature of the houses and vividly describe to you the horrors of shivering in a temperature a little below the fever heat in which they live at home. They denounce the cooking and complain because at an altitude of 5,000 feet in the Alps they did not find the delicacies which they were able to enjoy six months before the season in their own homes. We may smile at such things, and yet it is this craving for luxury that is destructive of high thinking.

III. What is luxury? It may be defined as whatever is costly and superfluous. And it is just this craving for what is costly and superfluous that is making this city a hot-bed of extravagance.

Of course, not everything is superfluous which is costly. Luxury is to be distinguished from good taste, and it is certainly not to be confounded with high art. There is a sense in which things once regarded as luxuries are to-day rightly looked upon as necessities. That is so because life has advanced rationally and its outward wants have so far become more varied. An English writer, for example, in

1577, denounces the effeminacy of his age because people were introducing chimneys instead of allowing the smoke to escape by the door, and were beginning to use vessels of earthen-ware in place of the old fashioned wooden utensils. But nevertheless the fact remains that in this foolish craving for things which are both costly and superfluous lies one fertile cause of the low toned intellectual life of our time.

IV. A second cause of this elaboration of life in our time is the spirit of social competition. Class vies with class for social supremacy. There is a vulgar ambition everywhere to "go one better" in the matter of functions and entertainments. Take, for instance, the case of a young married couple in good society, who have a certain limited income. One of the two courses is open to them, either to give up all needless extravagance and devote themselves to build up a quiet home, or to give up the blessings of home life and hang on to the luxuries and pleasures of their set. Too often, under the spur of social competition, it is the latter course that is followed. Home life is deliberately, yes and criminally, sacrificed for social life; and social life, so chosen, becomes the vestibule through which many a young husband passes into the prison house of debt.

V. A third cause for the elaboration of the material side of life in our time is the undue craving for pleasure. The emphatic words are undue craving. I am not advocating a sour puritanism or crabbed asceticism. Pleasure has, of course, its essential place in the scheme of right living, and to deny that place creates a reaction which, however ruinous, is inevitable. But in our time pleasure has become a tyranny. Its despotism has invaded every day of the week. It has no respect for time or seasons. It appeals to every passion of the soul, and by veiled suggestions it desecrates the holiest emotions of life.

VI. What are some of the perils which must inevitably result?

1. This life of luxury and extravagance intensifies class distinctions. The poor man, unable to share in these wanton extravagances, chafes beneath the restrictions, and hatred of his pampered betters bites at the rope of separation.

2. A second penalty that we must pay for our extravagant modes of life is that they create unnatural appetites. The essence of an unnatural appetite is that it demands a constant stimulus. It needs to be pampered by new sensations; and in the effort to satisfy this false and unnatural appetite, we are inventing forms of amusement so foolish that even pagan Rome might exclaim with wonder, "Behold how these Christians amuse themselves!"

3. Once more, one other penalty must be paid, and that is the heaviest of all. This mode of life is absolutely at variance with the spirit of the teaching of Jesus Christ. It is pagan, not Christian; it is barbaric, not civilized. No man who is honest in his effort to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ can live a life whose only thought is to satisfy the merely sensuous desires.—Rev. Donald Sage Mackay, D. D.

PRAYER MEETING DEPARTMENT.

"STUDIES IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES."

By E. I. BOSWORTH, D. D.

[From the book of the above title, copyrighted 1901, and reproduced here by permission of The International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association.]

JESUS' CONCEPTION OF THE DISCIPLE IN RELATION TO HIMSELF.

Jesus' Ambition for His Disciples.

1. In Jesus' conception of discipleship, as presented in the Gospel of John, there is a mutual sharing of each other described in the expression "abiding in Me, and I in him," John 15:5. The generosity of Jesus' deep love for the disciple appears in what He proposes to share with the disciple. Some of His expressions are startling in the richness of the expectations they arouse. Read John 15:11. He proposes to introduce the disciples to the deep sources of His own joy. Read John 14:27, remembering the unhurrying peacefulness and poise in Jesus' busy life.

Men in general like a place a little above that of their fellows. It is their own pre-eminence over at least some others that makes their place in life desirable; but read John 14:2, 3.

Many men have the same feeling about pre-eminence in achievement; but read John 14:12.

One likes to think of his own mission as a distinctive thing peculiarly his own. Read John 20:21.

His vision of God He shared with them. John 15:15; 17:6.

Even His "glory," the meaning of which it would be interesting to stop to consider, He does not propose to possess apart from the disciple. See John 17:22.

They also share His difficulties, John 15:18-21; and His victory over them, 16:33.

2. All these come, it would seem, not through any mechanical impartation or fiat of power, but through the intimate personal relation of discipleship. They are learned from Him. A deepening acquaintance with Jesus brings them in ever-enlarging measure. Evidently here is a field of experience in the realm of discipleship, from entrance into which Jesus was anxious to have His disciples secure large results.

The Disciple Sharing his Master's Self-denial.

1. Into the midst of disciples fascinated by the apparent opportunity for political advancement in the coming Kingdom, came Jesus with startling words about a cross and self-denial. Read Mark 8:31-37. The question here is, What is it for a disciple "to deny himself"? Notice that the disciple is called to "come after" his Master in this matter. It is an instance of the mutual sharing which constitutes the essence of discipleship. The answer to the question, then, must be gained from the illustration of what it is to deny one's self afforded by the career of Jesus. Think of the meaning of the words to "deny one's self." How did Jesus deny His own "self"? Did it involve the obliteration of personal character-

istics, the sacrifice of His individuality? Did it involve the sacrifice of His own personal development? That is, Was His personality less in any way than it would have been had He not denied Himself? Study the context in making reply to these questions.

In what respect would you amend the following sentences: To deny one's self is to deny to one's self the right to the supreme place in thought and action. It is to put the interests of other "selves" upon a level with those of one's own "self."

In Jesus' presentation of the subject, self-denial seems to consist, not so much in specific actions to be performed at intervals, as in a fundamental and permanent disposition. In all one's personal habits he does not content himself with asking, Will this practice injure me? He asks instantly a second question, What would be the effect of my doing this upon others? He does not ignore himself, but he proposes no longer to do anything solely because his self wants it done. Compare the homely statement of Paul in Phil. 2:4.

2. What are the consequences of the denial of one's self, either in the case of Jesus or His disciples, as stated in Mark 8:31-37?

If eternal life consists in eternal friendships as was seen to be the case in Study XVI, Fifth Day, then the fundamental importance of self-denial is evident, for no man is capable of an eternal friendship who does not deny himself. What light, if any, does this thought throw on the intensity with which Jesus repelled Peter's suggestion (v. 33)?

The Disciple Sharing his Master's Rest.

1. One of the most fundamentally important phases of the disciple's relation to Jesus is described in a passage already several times noted in other connections, Matt. 11:28-30. Read it again slowly and with the effort to determine the meaning of every word as you read. The questions that arise are, What does Jesus mean by "rest"? and, How does the disciple secure it?

2. Is rest inactivity? Notice that Jesus does not discard the phraseology of toil, "yoke," "burden" (v. 30). He seems to have in mind an easy way to wear a yoke, and a way of bearing a burden that will not prove burdensome. He appeals to His own example (v. 29), and certainly His was not an inactive life.

Is rest a result of the ability to gratify all of one's desires? Is it immunity from difficulties and annoyances? Consider here again the career of Jesus. How then would you define "rest"?

3. What is Jesus' recipe for rest? The secret of rest is evidently to be learned in the sphere of discipleship. According to v. 29 what is it that a disciple must "learn" from Jesus in order that he may have rest? In what did Jesus' "meekness" and "lowliness of heart" consist? Did they involve an under-estimate of Himself?

4. Consider the relation of pride to unrest. The chief occasion of our unrest is the fact that others have better things, greater honors,

higher social position, more consideration shown them than we have. This fact has power to affect us solely because we are proud. We are chagrined that we cannot fill a larger place, and are kept from doing our best in the place we can fill; or we strain ourselves trying to get out of our present place, instead of quietly outgrowing it, because we are proud. We are sensitive, "touchy," easily slighted; we chafe, fret, worry, fear that we shall be seen to fail, shrink from meeting strangers, and anxiously forebode blunders, chiefly because of our pride. Imagine Jesus to have been affected by these things!

Through the disciple's intimate association with Jesus, he learns to lay aside pride, to rejoice in the successes of others, and to accept simply and thankfully such opportunities for service as the day brings.

5. The word "learn" implies that the secret of rest is not imparted in a moment. To "learn" it requires time and persistent association with Jesus. He must have the daily companionship and attention of His disciples in order to communicate His rest.

Daily life with its multitude of perplexities, difficulties, failures, distractions, is what Jesus had in mind when He issued his great rest-call. He apparently did not propose to alter the disciple's surroundings, but to teach him rest just where he was.

"O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.
—Washington Gladden.

JESUS' CONCEPTION OF THE DISCIPLE AS A SON OF THE HEAVENLY FATHER.

The Disciple a Son of God.

1. As was seen in Part I, Jesus conceived His mission to be, in part at least, the revealing of God as the Father and the attaching of men to Himself as such a revelation. We need now to see clearly that in the close intimacy between Himself and His disciples, which constituted the theme of last week's study, this bringing of men to God is accomplished. The prominent feature of the disciple's relation to Jesus was seen to be Jesus' disposition to share what He had with the disciple. John, in whose presentation this feature is so prominent, himself emphasized the fact that this involved for the disciple a share in the filial relation of Jesus to His Heavenly Father. Read John 1:12. Does this sharing of His Sonship with the disciple preclude any uniqueness of filial relationship to God on the part of Jesus? Is He in any essential particular different from any of the other sons of God? On this point see in the Synoptic presentation Matt. 11:27; and in John's Gospel note 1:18; 3:13; 14:6, 9; and any other passages that occur to you.

2. Turn again to the last clause of John 20:17, and note the vivid way in which this truth of sonship by virtue of discipleship is presented. It is the truth that is uppermost in His mind as He comes freshly from His victory over death. It is as though He stood for a

moment with one arm about the disciple, pointing upward and trying, in the quiet enthusiasm of His victory over death, to arouse the disciple's slow apprehension by putting the great truth in its simplest form: "My Father, your Father!"

In the Synoptic presentation, Matt. 28:10, note the one word that involves this thought of common sonship.

3. The more fundamental question arises, What is it to be a son of God? It would seem that there must be the basis for a filial relationship in the very nature of man. A dog is a kind of creation that does not have it in him to be a son of God, while man is made in the image of God. This suggestion of sonship in man's very nature is of no avail unless there be a real recognition of God as a Father. The man must really be such a son as a Father like God ought to have. This phase of the subject will be taken up to-morrow.

Note.—This book, 217 pages, will be sent postpaid for \$1.00 by F. M. Barton, Cleveland, Ohio.

ADDITIONAL PRAYER MEETING TOPICS.

From the Congregational Hand Book, by permission of the publishers, The Pilgrim Press, Boston.

FRESH GRAPPLING WITH OLD PROBLEMS.

November 29-December 5.—Unanswered Prayer. Matt. 26:39; Heb. 5:5-10; Luke 18:1-8

Your own; others'. Reasons arising from personal conditions. Reasons inhering in the providential purposes of God.

December 6-12.—The prosperous wicked; the unfortunate righteous. Psalms 37:35-40; 1 Pet. 1:3-9.

Is the prosperity of the one and the adversity of the other apparent or real? Final readjustments.

December 13-19.—Why does God send pain? Heb. 12:1-11.

As a warning; as a punishment; as a means of personal growth. To reveal Himself; to foster sympathy with others.

December 20-26.—Christmas; giving and receiving. Acts 30:35; John 3:11-18.

The gift festival. Its origin; God's gift to man. Its celebration; man's gift to man. Its perfect fulfillment; man's gift to God.

December 27-January 2.—Taking account of stock. Rom. 8:18-39; Psalms 91:1-16.

Assets and obligations. Worth of experience. Attained character. Faith, hope and love. Failure offset by God's promises.

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UNUSUAL.

Mother up-stairs—"What is Charley crying about?"

Jamie—"Cause I won't give him any of my cake."

Mother—"Is his finished?"

Jamie—"Yes, he cried while I was eating that, too."

Little boy—"Papa, these folks didn't all go to heaven, did they?"

Father—"Hush; what makes you think so?"

Little boy—"Well, it says on some stones, 'Peace to his ashes.'"

One of the churches in a little western town is so fortunate as to have a young woman as pastor. She was called to the door of the parsonage one day, and saw a much embarrassed farmer of the German type.

"Dey said der minister lifted in dis house."

"Yes," replied the fair pastor.

"Vell—m—I—vant to kit merriit."

"To get married? Very well, I can marry you," said the ministriss, encouragingly.

"Oh, but I got a girl already!" was the disconcerting reply.—Brooklyn Life.

This story is told in a parish not far distant, where they were raising money for re-furnishing the church: The colored sexton remarked of a certain fairly well-to-do farmer having a reputation for close-fistedness, that he was "as stingy as old Caesar." "Why do you think Caesar was stingy?" he was asked. "Well, you see," came the reply, "when the Pharisees gave our Lord a penny, Jesus asked them, 'Whose subscription is this?' and they said 'Caesar's.'"

Robbie's Description of a Bagpipe.—Four year old Robbie ran breathlessly into the house. "Oh, mama!" he said, "there's a man out here with a dead pig that sings; come quick!"

Why is it folks sit this way in

The car we miss

While in the car we catch at last

We're jammed in likethis?

It is related that a sophomore on commencement day was crossing the campus of Emory College, Oxford, Ga., with his sweetheart. She stopped to read the inscription upon the stone to the memory of Ignatius Few, the first president.

"What does that mean?" she asked, pointing to the line: "Vivit—non mortuus est."

Proud of his ability to translate Latin, the student explained: "He lives. No, he don't; he's dead."

A teacher was instructing a class of infants in Sunday School and letting the children finish her sentences to make sure they understood. The idol had eyes, she said, but it couldn't—

"See," cried the children.

It had ears, but it couldn't—

"Hear," said the class.

It had lips, but it couldn't—

"Speak," said the children.

It had a nose, but it couldn't—

"Wipe it!" shouted the little ones.

The teacher dismissed the class after this last answer.

Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, has a brother who shares the Senator's dry humor.

A notorious mean and stingy man, who lived in Worcester, the home of the Hoars, died, and a friend asked the younger Hoar if he intended to go to the funeral.

"No," he replied, "but I am in favor of it."—Saturday Evening Post.

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XMAS AND EVERY MORN'
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SERMON DEPARTMENT.

PREPARATION FOR SERVICE.

By REV. P. S. HENSON, D. D., recently of Hanson Place Baptist Church, Brooklyn, and now of Tremont Temple, Boston.

[This sermon was preached by Dr. Henson on his return from his vacation this summer. He was born in Fluvanna County, Virginia, December 7, 1831, and graduated 1848 at Richmond College, taught school two years, studied law and was ordained to the ministry 1856; pastor Fluvanna Baptist Church. Pastor later at Broad St. and Memorial Church, Philadelphia, then First Baptist Church, Chicago; then Hanson place, Brooklyn, whence he was called unanimously to Tremont Temple, Boston. No other preacher at his age, so far as we know, ever received such an important call. The sermon was reproduced from the Brooklyn Eagle, by whom it was copyrighted, 1903.]

✓ Text—Isaiah 6:8. "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, here am I, send me."

In the sixth chapter of Isaiah we have an account of the prophet's call to service and his preparation for it, and the critics protest that its interjection here, instead of its occurrence at the beginning of the book, is a dislocation and violation of all the rules of literary composition.

But it is quite possible that the critics know more of the rules of art than of the facts of Christian expression, for in times without number it has happened to the children of God that far along in life they have come to the crisis when they have gotten such an inspiration and uplift as has changed their whole character and trend of being. Thus was it with Abraham, after his offering of Isaac on Mount Moriah; and with Jacob, after his wrestling with the angel of the Lord at the brook Jabbok. He was never the same man after that. So was it with Moses, after he had seen God in the burning bush, and with Elisha after the mantle of Elijah had fallen on his shoulders, and with the apostles after they had been endued with Pentecostal power. Thus was it with Thomas Chalmers when in the midst of his ministry there came to him an experience of grace such as he had never known. He had been preaching for years and with great ability, but nothing came of it. But there came a time when the ideal became real to him, when intellectualities were changed to spiritualities. He had only toyed with them before, but now he gripped them and they gripped him. Hitherto he had been but a fencing master in a gymnasium; now he was a swordsman in the field of battle and the slain of the Lord were many. Even so was it with Isaiah. He was a prince of the blood royal, a courtly preacher, polite and polished and politic, but presently there came to him a new experience that made of him another man.

Every feature of this experience has profound spiritual significance, and if, as I trust we are, tired of just marking time instead of marching, of just beating the air instead of beating the enemy, if we would rise above the dreary round of religious formality to

the lofty height of real religious achievement we cannot do better than devoutly to ponder every sentence of this narrative.

Notice, first of all, that Isaiah had a vision of God.

This is the way in which all genuine religious experience begins. It may not be such a vision as was vouchsafed to Jacob at Bethel or Ezekiel by the river Chibar, or Isaiah in the temple, or Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, but somehow, somewhere there must come to the waiting soul a vision of God. It came to Isaiah "in the year that King Uzziah died." That the two events were related we have every reason to believe.

Death is always an august visitant; no matter when, or where, or how he comes, but never more so than when he knocks at the palace gate where some mighty monarch holds his court and when waiving the armed but awed guards aside he enters unannounced and unbidden the chamber of royalty and lays his icy hand on the wrist of the king and whispers, "Come with me," and the mighty monarch bows his head and meekly obeys.

Aye, aye, the chief captains and the mighty men, the men who have swayed imperial scepters over conquered nations, the men who at the head of charging squadrons have swept to victory—how helpless are they in the grip of that fell destroyer who never met his master but once and then in the person of the Man of Nazareth.

Never do we so profoundly feel the utter helplessness of human nature as on some such august occasion as I have pictured—such an occasion as Isaiah witnessed when Uzziah died. We have no kings, thank God, in this free land, but we have witnessed just such occasions, when some foremost man, as kingly as any king, has been borne to his long home. There are many right here in Greater New York who have not forgotten the solemn scenes when the great silent soldier who led our armies to victory in the civil war, at last had encountered an enemy to whom he had been obliged to make unconditional surrender. And, then, in the midst of all the drapery of a nation's woe and the mighty throngs of silent sympathizers and spectators, the long line of Federal and Confederate veterans followed the catafalque that bore the remains of the great captain to his silent resting place in the dust. And as at such a time we listen to the muffled drums we seem to see the flax uplifted burning, vanishing into smoke, and to hear solemn voices chanting, "Sic transit gloria mundi."

Never shall I forget that fateful night in Chicago when over the wires trembled the heart-breaking message that the chivalrous, tender, great-souled and greatly beloved McKinley had breathed his life out, and though there were thousands upon thousands of human beings congregated in the streets, the hush of death was in the air, untill, strangely enough, a clear, sweet voice

rang out, "Nearer my God to Thee," and every head was bared and every knee was bowed and thousands of voices joined in the sweet refrain and there, in the supposedly wickedest city in the continent, on that black night we saw the Lord high and lifted up. But not only on such august occasions have such expressions come to us; but in our own humble homes and our own little circles, when the dread messenger has visited us. There were no prancing steeds, no gleaming lines of soldiers, no half-masted flags, or draped public buildings, but only a little bunch of crepe on the door and a plain casket inside, containing all that was mortal of one that meant more to us than all the potentates that the world ever honored. And we felt that this old world would never be the same world any more, so dark it was and cold. But presently, through the darkness there streamed a strange light and we saw the Lord high and lifted up, and a strange peace filled our hearts and over our dead we were enabled to say: "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

But, however, it come, no man is ready to go forth as the Lord's messenger until he has first seen the Lord high and lifted up.

The trouble with many a modern minister would seem to be that he is so high and lifted up himself that he cannot see the Lord without looking down upon Him.

Or if not that, he has become such an enthusiast for humanity that he can see nothing but man. He is profoundly persuaded that man has been belittled and bullied, that he is not at all the fallen, sinful creature that the narrow minded, hard hearted elder theologians have pictured him, but a species of divinity, enfolding within himself all noblest policies and possibilities, and that it makes but little matter what one thinks of God just so he loves his fellow man he has compassed the whole round of earthly obligations, and is fit for all the bliss of heaven, if indeed there be a heaven.

Such theorists, theologians, sociologists, philanthropists, whatever you please to call them, may pose as broad and liberal, and may win popular applause, but will never win the souls of man. Before a man can have power with man he must first of all have power with God, and before he can have power with God he must have a vision of Him or His throne "high and lifted up." Thus was it with Jonathan Edwards, who had long rebelled against the temporal representations of God's sovereignty, until one day as he was walking in the woods there rolled in upon his open soul those mighty words: "Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible," and there came to him such a sense of God's almightyship and such a sweet submission to it as he had never felt before, and forth from the woods he went, out into the light, and became the mightiest Christian harvester that this continent has ever seen. Along with the vision of God in Isaiah's case came the abasement of self. "Woe is me, for I am a man of

divine lips." And naturally enough this came about. He had seen God.

Men know not themselves because they know not Him. Thus was it with Job. He had been as conceited a moralist as dwelt in Mesopotamia. And the design of his afflictions was to take the conceit out of him. At the last he had a vision of God and then he cried: "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye hath seen Thee, and, lo, I do abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Thus was it with Isaiah. The searchlight of God's holiness was poured in upon all the secrets of his heart and life. No wonder that he cried out, "Woe is me."

No man is fit to preach to others until he has seen the plague of his own heart, and that heart has been broken with a sense of sin.

They say that the best of all fiddles is an old Cremona and that the best of all old Cremonas is one that has been all "smashed up" and glued together again, so as to make it not simply as good as new, but a great deal better. So the best of all instruments to sound the music of the gospel is a heart that has been broken with a sense of sin and then cemented with the blood of Christ.

Paul was the greatest of preachers because he had been brought to feel that he was the chief of sinners. But Isaiah not only had been brought to realize his own exceeding sinfulness, but that the race to which he belonged was in like lamentable condition. They were all involved in common guilt and ruin. And hence there welled up in his heart not only great contrition, but great compassion. He realized as few modern ministers do that this is a lost world and that men are perishing in their sins.

Oh, brethren, the devil is no longer feeding Christians to the lions or burning them at the stake, but soothing them into somnolence and crying, "All is well," when perdition threatens. We cannot blink the fact that universalism is creeping into our pews and pulpits and we have come to think that men who believe in the old gospel are pestilent disturbers of the public peace. God help us to rouse ourselves to a realization of the awful fact that men must believe and obey the gospel or perish eternally and that if we fail to give them the gospel their blood will be upon our souls.

But in Isaiah's case there was not only the vision of God and realization of sin, but the touch of celestial fire. And that fire signifies the cleansing from iniquity. True it is that cleansing is supposed to be effected by the blood of Christ. By the divine homeopathy of redemption the scarlet stain is effaced by the scarlet blood. But many figures cannot exhaust the past. Sin is more than a stain. It is a dreadful drop that debases all the nature and therefore it is said "He shall sit as a refiner's fire," and therefore we sing, "The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design thy drop to consume and thy gold to refine." We instinctively shrink from the touch of fire, but never till it has done its perfect work shall we be fit for ef-

fective service. But fire means more than mere purification. What we want is not merely clean hearts, but hot hearts, such as the Psalmist describes when he says: "While I was musing the fire burned." The great need of the church today is not golden mouthed orators or silver tongued orators, but orators with tongues of fire, and that means hearts of fire, hearts all aglow with love to God and love to man, and when it comes to that the whole world will presently be afire with the glory of God. And last of all there must be unconditional surrender for service.

Away back in eternity the everlasting Father asked, "Who will go for us?" And the everlasting Son replied, "Lo, I come."

He has come. He lived and loved and died and rose again, and thus made provision for human redemption. The publication and the application of that redemption has been left to us, and now our Redeemer bends over the battlements of heaven and asks, "Who will go for us?" Isaiah answered, "Here am I, send me." There was no temporizing, no vacillation, no pleading of unfitness, but prompt, emphatic, loyal surrender of his whole being for love and self-sacrificing service. God grant us grace to make like response and to go forth to battle and to bleed and die, if need be, in the cause of God and of humanity.

Seed Time and Harvest. ✓

Illustrative features of a sermon by Len G. Broughton, Baptist Tabernacle, Atlanta, Ga.

✓ "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Gal. 6:7.

Some passages of Scripture need to be split up and divided to be intelligently studied, but here is a passage that needs no splitting up. There is not a man, whether Jew or Gentile, saint or sinner, that does not know this text, uttered by the Apostle Paul, is true. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is true in the history of nations and communities, and it is true in the history of individuals.

FRANCE AND THE DEVIL.

At one time in the history of France she decided to rule the Bible out of her national life. The Bible was taken from the homes of her people, and the enemies of truth thought they had won a mighty victory. Alas, alas, how mistaken France was! From that day when they ruled the Bible out until this present hour the French people have been damned by Almighty God. One bloody revolution after another has characterized the history of that people, until today the French Republic stands quivering in the balances liable to fall at any moment. I would not be surprised any day to take up a paper and find that France was overthrown and that her soil was drenched in blood.

Her moral history has kept pace with the downward course of her political history. At one time France was so immoral it is said ten thousand dead infants were fished out of the

sewer pipes of the city of Paris in one year. What is this? It is a demonstration of the truthfulness of this text. France sowed hell and unbelief and reaped hell and unbelief.

THE TRUTH BROUGHT HOME.

This ought to open the eyes of Atlanta. If nothing else opens them this should. There are people in this town by the hundreds and thousands who have no higher interest in the city than the money they can get out of it. Their plans and schemes are all cut to the pattern of the almighty dollar. This is seen in the proceedings of this week with respect to the bill before council to allow pooling on horse racing. I sat in the council and heard the men pro and con discuss the question. I heard men declare they were in favor of horse racing, because they believed it would bring money to this city. There are prominent men who would sell this city hide and hoof to the devil, if they could get enough for it. Here is your opportunity as a Christian citizen. Are you going to sit with your hands folded and let them sell us out to the devil?

"Whatsoever a man soweth." Young man, may I address you tonight? Young woman, may I address you? Many of us have our lives behind us, but most of you are young. May God help you to pay attention to what I am saying.

EXPECTING A HARVEST.

It is true that a man expects to reap when he sows. You see a man sowing wheat, you don't have to ask him what he expects to harvest. If you see a young man working as an apprentice in a machine shop for four years, getting scarcely a living, you know that he is expecting to get a trade. When you see a student burning midnight oil you know that he is expecting an education that will help him serve humanity.

God help us to remember that this is likewise true of human conduct. There are some who don't believe this, because they don't stop to reflect.

Once when I was speaking along this line, there was a young man sitting in the congregation who said, "I am sick and tired of such silly preacher talk." He got up and went home. The next morning when the paper came out with flaming head lines giving an account of his misdeeds it was plain he had been taught a sad lesson. He had been a night drinker for twelve months and had been spending his employer's money, and that very night his employer found it out. Next morning he was ready to be put behind the bars. He begged his employer's pardon; he offered to refund the money; he promised to live honest. His employer said, "No, sir, you have fooled me. You have lived a double life. I can't trust you any more." That man knew then this text in Gal. 6:7, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," was true.

There are hundreds and thousands of young men in this city who are enjoying what they call the "sowing their wild oats." They are just as sure to reap a harvest of sin as they live. Some sad things have come under my observation in the last four years. Think of the many young men, who, in the course of their wild oat-sowing have gone a step too far

and brought upon themselves a life of disgrace!

EXPECTING WHAT IS SOWN.

It is also true that a man has to reap after the manner of his sowing.

If a man sows barley he expects to reap barley, and not oats.

A colored man was told to plant barley and planted oats. At harvest time the master came to see how the harvest was and to his astonishment found oats. He said to the old man, "Didn't I tell you to plant barley?" "Yes, sir, but I believe you're the wisest man I ever seed, and I heard you say you were going to heaven, and you had been living for the devil, and if that is true, a man can plant oats and reap barley." The old master stepped aside and began to think. The result was he resolved to be a better man.

I ask you men tonight, how in the name of God do some of you ever expect to be anything, sowing a life of dissipation? Cut out the text from the word of God, and take experience, and I ask you, how can it be done?

EXPECTING MORE THAN IS SOWN.

A man has to reap more than he sows.

A man plants a quart and reaps a bushel. A man plants a grain of corn, he expects to reap a hundred or more. The saddest thing of all is, the reaping is so much more than the sowing.

One day a whole community in the western section of our country was greatly perplexed by an awful murder. A boy was found lying by the roadside with his skull fractured and his heart cut out of his body. It was discovered that the lad's playmate did it. When they traced the history of the lad's playmate and of the murder to its origin, it was found that in the library of the boy's father was a book, giving an account of the life of Jesse James, the notorious robber and murderer. It is said, every hideous passage was marked with a pencil. The book showed it had been used oftener than any other book in the library. Perhaps the father never read it. He remembered buying it, but denied ever reading it. The young, boyish mind got that hideous thing and fed upon it until his whole mind was on fire to do some devilish thing. In a moment of rage, when the pent up fire had ignited, that hideous deed was committed. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Father and mother, I pray you tonight in behalf of your son and daughter, in behalf of the community in which you live, be careful what you let the young mind feed on. I believe the newspapers are responsible for many crimes by the manner in which the hideous deeds of today are written up.

I remember a young man was sentenced to die for the murder of a young woman. That young fellow said on the gallows, when asked if he wished to make a statement, "Yes, but I don't care to make it to the whole crowd. I want to make it to a friend. Just say, for the good it may do some one else, the thing that brought me to this place was whiskey, bad women, and low-down trashy novels." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Brother, you keep on the same road you are

going—just keep on! You say it's hard to break off. Then, just keep on. It will be harder tomorrow; it will be still harder the next day. It will cost you a mighty struggle to quit, but it will cost you more than a struggle then. If you can't quit today, pray tell me what you think of tomorrow? Would I be mastered by anything? Would I be a coward? "Can't quit!" God help you.

JESUS CHRIST READY TO SAVE.

There is one thing more I want you to know. Jesus Christ is ready to save the sinner. God be praised for the fact. If anyone tells you it is too late to be saved, just put it down that man don't know the Bible. Jesus can save the sinner, and will save the sinner when he comes to Him. He will help you quit. Just throw up your hands and hear Him say, "I will, if thou wilt."

This is true, but sinner—wild oat sower—listen. He never promised to save from its consequence in his life. May I be better understood? Jesus Christ promises to wipe out sin, but He never promised to obliterate the scar the sinner has made. If you get drunk and somebody cuts off your nose, the Lord will forgive you for getting drunk, but did you ever hear tell of the Lord giving a man a new nose? Some of you are going headlong in sin and you are expecting to stop after a while, and think it will be all right. You have got to reap this thing here, as sure as this text stands in the word of God.

INHERITED SIN.

When I was engaged in the practice of medicine I was appointed on a committee to examine applicants for West Point. I examined them on science and physiology. There were twenty men who applied. The last young man was the handsomest fellow I ever saw. He was about six feet and weighed about two hundred. When I saw that fellow come in I said to myself, "My! quite a giant of a chap to be only twenty years old." One of the committee said to me, "He has made a round hundred on all our branches. We leave him now to you to make your examination." I said, "You are such a handsome fellow it hardly seems necessary to make a physical examination, but I must." I said, "I might as well look at your teeth." He said, "There isn't a decayed spot in my mouth. Were I as sound everywhere as in my mouth, I would be the soundest man in this country." He opened his mouth and just as I looked into it I was struck with horror. I said, "My friend, no use going any further." Said he, "What are you talking about?" I said, "You have teeth that point to a certain sin which is behind you." He broke down and cried. I felt like crying with him. He went home and told his father what I said. His father wrote me a letter saying I had slandered his family. I said to him, "I am as sorry about it as you are. I couldn't pass him." They called together some of the leading doctors of the town, and among them their family physician, who had never thought to examine him that way. They said, "There is no use going any further, that thing fixes it."

My friend, Jesus Christ doubtless forgave the sin back there; but he didn't stop the reaping.

Oh, young men and young women, make up your minds so far as you are concerned, the generations yet unborn shall not look back over such a history as that and name you as the guilty one. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

SIN AND ITS SCAR.

One more example. I knew a bright, sweet, beautiful young woman who was very fond of going to the german. She always went with some young man who didn't care a cent for her health. Every night she had opportunity she would go. She danced as long as anybody, and bragged about it. She came home late at night, with every nerve on fire with excitement, with every pore in her skin congested with blood. She would come out of a warm room and into the open air with no sleeves, no neck, and no anything else, except a lot of clothes on the ground. She would go to bed and sleep late the next day, violating every law of nature. Think of a mother and father with sense enough to keep out of an asylum, allowing their daughter to live such a life of dissipation, and expecting to reap a healthy daughter and a happy home. What happened? After a while she began to cough. The physician found she had a case of catarrhal consumption, with which she died. Before she died she gave herself to God and was saved, but her life was not spared. You may get forgiveness for your sin, but the scar will stay with you for all time. My friends, I ask you tonight, in all candor and solemnity before God, is it not time we were stopping our sowing of wild oats? The awful harvest is ahead of us. You talk about pleasure in your wild oat sowing. Is it a pleasure?

HUGGING WEASELS.

Wilberforce was walking on the Alps one day, and saw a mountain eagle light near where he was and take something in his talons and soar away to the skies. He watched the eagle to see if he could find out what it was when suddenly he saw the great bird begin to wabble, and then, as if shot with an arrow, tumbled to the ground. He slipped to the place where the eagle fell; and there in his grasp was an Alpine weasel which he had taken for his prey, but which had sucked the eagle's blood until he was dead.

Oh, my friends, God help us as we try to rivet this thought! Here are men and women who are holding within the talons of their affections the weasel of lust or some other sin. What when the weasel you have hugged to your breast shall have taken your physical and moral life? God help us to examine our seed before we sow them.

Good News from a Far Country.

Notes from a sermon by Charles H. Spurgeon.

Text—Proverb 25: 25. "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."

It is only on hot summer days that we can appreciate the illustration here employed; for we dwell in a well-watered country where thirst is readily assuaged. Yet we can imagine ourselves in the condition of Hagar, Ishmael, and Samson; or of a caravan in the desert; or of poor sailors in a boat upon the salt sea dying for a draught of water.

When separated from friends by their journeying, or by our own, or when we have a trading interest in foreign ports, or a holy concern in missions, good news from a far country is eminently refreshing.

We shall use the text in three ways.

I. Good news for sinners from God.

Sin put men into a far country, but here is the good news—

1. God remembers you with pity.

2. He has made a way for your return.

3. He has sent a messenger to invite you home.

4. Many have already returned, and are now rejoicing.

5. He has provided all means for bringing you home.

6. You may return at once. "All things are ready."

If this good news be received it will be exceedingly refreshing to thirsty souls. To others it will be commonplace.

II. Good news for saints from heaven.

1. News does come from heaven. By the Spirit's application of the Word, and by the sweet whispers of Jesus' love.

2. To keep up this intercourse is most refreshing, and it is very possible; for Jesus delights to commune with us, the Father himself loveth us, and the Holy Spirit abideth with us forever.

3. If for a while suspended, the renewal is sweeter than ever, even as cold water is doubly refreshing to a specially thirsty soul.

4. The news itself may thus be summarized:

The Father on the throne of Providence works all things for your good.

The Lord Jesus is interceding, preparing a place for you, and representing you before God.

He will shortly come in his glory.

Many like yourself are with him in the Father's house above.

You are wanted there; they cannot be a perfect family till you are brought home.

Receive this, and feel the attractions of heaven drawing you above the distractions of earth.

III. Good news for heaven from earth.

It gives joy to the home circle to hear that—

1. Sinners are repenting.

2. Saints are running their race with holy diligence.

3. Churches are being built up and the Gospel is spreading.

4. More saints are ripening and going home.

Let us accept the message of love and be happy in the Lord.

Let us tell the glad tidings to all around.

METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

By THOS. J. CROSS.

Fall and Winter Activity.

Now let us turn over that "new leaf." Where shall I begin? A good question. Suppose a few of the members get together—not a large crowd—say pastor and one member from each department of the church organizations. That would mean one deacon, one trustee, one member of ladies' aid society, one member of choir, one officer of Sunday School, and one from the young people. Now we have the scriptural number—seven. This will make a good committee whom we shall call "The Committee on Leakages." Every church has them, so there is no need to question the advisability of such an organization.

The pastor in looking over the membership has noticed several vacant seats, there must be a reason why Mr. Blank has dropped out. "Yes, we all have missed him." One of the objects of this meeting is to find out why he left. "Why, don't some of you know he has had trouble in his family?" "What is the trouble?" "He was discharged from his work, no fault of his own, and because he cannot pay the dues he promised he has simply remained away from his church." What a revelation to the pastor, who knew nothing about the case. "I will see after that case," said the pastor, "he is too good a fellow to lose, and if nothing else is accomplished tonight, this is worth my time." How many a good member is lost to usefulness because the pastor does not know and some member does.

The superintendent of the school related some of his problems, such as the need of a few teachers, who had some ability, to take of a crowd of young men and women, among them were the children of the members present, but who took little or no interest in the school. The "how" of running this part of the work, and the responsibility had never before entered the mind of some present at that meeting. From that night there was a closer bond of union between officials of church and school. Then the president of the missionary society spoke of sending a box to some needy missionary during the fall. One said after hearing that little speech, "I never did understand the meaning of sending boxes to the poor preachers' families before, I will tell my folks at home about it." Yes, a member of the church for many years, but could not get interested in missions. A member of the finance board asked if he could have just a word about money matters. Of course, that is the object of this meeting. "Well, I would like to know if you members know how this church is carried on, and into what tight places we get, simply because so many seem to think that if the day happens to be rainy no envelope is deposited, or if not present and the next Sunday it is neglected. In this way our church income falls behind." This was news to some who could not understand why there was a deficit at the end of the year. Others took part in that meeting, and each felt that the work of that church would

be better carried on in the future because of mutual help and information.

Many a leakage in the church could be stopped if we could get together more often and prayerfully consider plans.

To secure the best results from such resurrections, a few additional suggestions ought to be considered as settled.

The weekly prayer meeting. Urge each member to decide well in advance that one night, a week-night, is engaged for church. The same general principle might apply to Bible School work and the Sabbath services.

The best way to resume work is to resume.

Caring for Converts.

From the Temple Review we gather how the work among converts and enquirers is carried on. Surely this work should command our attention. A successful pastor says that one of the most efficient committees he has in his large church is that on converts and enquirers. Babies in the Christian life, and those who are seeking the new life, need instruction, feeding, sympathy and watchful care. This committee is composed of the best and most devoted members of the church, who work with the pastor among the converts and enquirers, whether in the enquiry room at the church, or in the homes of those in search of the light. The committee takes the names and addresses of converts and enquirers and looks after them until they become members of the church. Then, when they are within the fold, without seeming to do so officially, the committee maintains a vigilant watch over these young Christians, and helps them in every way possible.

A meeting regularly held for converts and enquirers is the outgrowth of this committee work. In this meeting the committee renders valuable service. The meeting is a conversational one and decidedly informal. Difficulties encountered by young Christians and seekers after the truth as it is in Jesus are brought out and freely discussed, and advice and encouragement given. This meeting is usually conducted by the pastor, who begins by asking some older Christian to tell of his conversion, and by questioning draws out his difficulties and experiences that will be most helpful to the enquirer. The pastor says that this committee and meeting have been productive of much good throughout the history of the church.

If your church is not large enough to maintain a meeting regularly for converts and enquirers at the church, try asking them to meet at your home and have the committee present also.

A pastor once made the awful confession that there was no one in his church who could engage in convert and enquiry work. If there is no one upon whom you can call for such a service of love, try immediately to educate your members along this line. Make it the subject of mid-week prayer meetings, occasionally, or call special meetings for the purpose if necessary. The ambassadorship of Christ is not

relegated to the pulpit alone. Every Christian is a messenger who should know Christ's message and how to deliver it.

Are you looking out for converts and enquirers?

Why not have a committee of seven selected from the membership who have been received into the Church during the last seven years. This might bring certain members together who have not been working, while the younger Christian could be taught to tell others how to become a Christian.

INSTRUCT THE CONVERTS TO BEGIN WORK.

Instruct the young converts as they shall come into the church this fall. Why not intelligently place before each convert a card, thus causing them to feel from the very start of their Christian cause that some definite and distinct work is expected?

The following has proved to be worth the trying.

The Christian Workers' Card.

The pastor of the St. James Street Church of Christ, Boston, has found a "Christian Workers' Card" very helpful not only to himself but to the members of this church. To those receiving the hand of fellowship a New Testament and this card are given:

THE CHRISTIAN WORKERS' CARD.

St. James Street Church of Christ.

J. H. Mohorter, Minister.

Boston, Mass. 190

Desiring to enter into active work with this church, of which I am now a member, I cheerfully pledge myself to affiliate with, and engage in, the activities checked below, and shall gladly respond, so far as I am able, to any call made upon me.

1. Sunday School Teacher.
2. Senior Endeavor Society.
3. Intermediate End. Society.
4. Junior Endeavor Society.
5. Woman's Miss. Society.
6. Ladies' Aid Society.
7. Pastor's Aid Department.
8. Personal Work Among Sick and Poor.
9. Personal Effort to Lead One Soul to Christ each month.

Name
Address

St. James Street Church of Christ, Boston.

I wish to do my part in bearing the current expenses of the church, and will give, each week, for that purpose until further written notice

Name
Address
Date

Please fill out this card and drop into church collection basket. As soon as possible thereafter, a package of weekly offering envelopes will be prepared and handed you by

Walden L. Haskin, Treasurer.

26 Alaska St., Roxbury, Boston, Mass.

With but few exceptions the cards have been returned, the upper half to the pastor, the lower half to the treasurer. This method assists the pastor in finding such work for the members as they will enjoy doing, and when he needs some one for some special work, by

preserving the card, he knows upon whom he can call.

While the pastor is informing, the convert is also forming ideas.

Ask the Pew to Help the Pulpit.

In order to be the most practical and helpful, I made this request from my pulpit: Friends, if you had your life to live over, what virtues would you cultivate and vices shun? The varied and interesting answer received formed the basis for two months' sermons. A small card with these words, "Had I my life to live over," a series of Sunday evening sermons. You will be interested in knowing what some people would do if they could begin life again. I made the matter plain that I did not want signatures to this. Many felt they could answer quite freely, and they did so. One person wrote, "I don't know why I was born anyhow, no one cares for me." With the text, "No man cares for my soul" I endeavored to prove that someone was interested in every life. A postal card had these words, "Had I my life to live over I would be careful in using every opportunity to improve my mind; a crisis came in my life and I did not know how to meet it." This suggested the theme, "The Wrong Investment." Another wrote, "The first drink was my curse." I called that sermon, "The trap that caught me." Another wrote, "A certain class of reading has been a great curse to me." This suggested the theme, "Worse than a plague." "I have such a vile temper that I am afraid it will be my ruin." This was food for a sermon entitled "My greatest enemy." One wrote saying, "Disobedience to parents caused my downfall." This was sermon stuff for a talk on "Disobeying signals." A postal had these words, "My mistake in starting in life was in not beginning in our own home instead of boarding." I spoke upon "Houses vs. Homes." "My school days were not well used." From which I spoke upon the subject, "Commencement or Ending, Which?" The series made an impression on a number of persons who recognized their own history! Ask your own people to help you; for the reason you desire to help them.

Make Use of the Men—How.

One of the questions that confronts the pastor is the utilization of the male members of his flock. Taking it for granted, the pastor believes that "when God makes a Christian, God breaks the mould," in other words, do not try to get the same kind of work from the same individual. How is this for one method? Call a meeting of all the men of your church; a cup of chocolate, a little fruit, etc., supplied by the pastor or one who feels that it would be a privilege to assist in this way. The men have assembled; there is perfect freedom among those present. Says one, "We are all interested in the welfare of our church; and I propose that the entire membership be on distinct committees; it is useless to ask Mr. A. to sing; but he has a talent for figures; put him on the finance board; but he has had no experience in church work." How long have you been a member of this church, brother? (Of course he was at this meeting as were the

others of whom we shall speak.) Mr. A. says, "I do not remember that I have ever been asked to do anything in which I felt I could be of any real use; give me a task in which I can be something more than a figure head and I will do my part." How many a member has been assigned to some special work for which there is absolutely no talent for it? Well, what is a pastor to do? Do what we are endeavoring to do in this department; to help each other; what one can use, the other cannot; but like a well spread table, the menu is before you, but that does not mean that you will take all that has been prepared, does it?

After considerable discussion (the ice cream etc., that had been handed around seemed to awaken some latent cells), the outcome of the meeting was twenty departments formed for service. "The Brotherhood of Service" is the name the Brantly church has given to organization.

1. The ushers are known as the brothers of the vestibule.

2. The singers or orchestra—brothers of praise.

3. The finance board—brothers of the treasury.

4. The social committee—brothers of the upper room.

5. The prayer committee—the brothers of the mercy seat.

6. The advertising committee—the brothers of proclamation.

7. The Bible School workers—brothers of the Word.

8. Those interested in personal work—brothers of the Gospel.

9. The work of caring for the poor—the brothers of fellowship.

10. There are other ways of using men that have not been mentioned; and have proved helpful in my church, says many a reader of these methods. Send them along, brother, to the writer, and they will be passed along to the thousands of readers who will do just what you are now doing—looking for methods that bring results!

Note.—If you have succeeded in some particular method, tell our editor about it, and he'll tell our ten thousand readers. Address Thos. J. Cross, 504 N. Broadway, Baltimore, Md.

HAY-STACK NEEDLE HUNTERS.

Do you realize the amount of time we spend in searching for illustrations. One in this issue was merely hinted at in an advertisement. With that for a clue articles on the subject were found in Scribner's, Harper's Weekly, Youth's Companion, McClures, Leslie's Weekly, Munsey's, Century, and in six or seven issues of the Outlook. These articles were scanned until we finally found it in an issue of the Outlook.

Sometimes you think of a striking illustration in history, or you are going to preach on a certain text and you want a copy of a famous sermon, or some information of a certain character for an address you are going to make.

Anything we cannot find in Cleveland libraries will be referred to Librarians of one or two theological seminaries.

This service is open to you and will cost you 40 cents an hour. All except the longest sermons can

be copied in five hours. Looking up an illustration usually takes an hour, especially if you have no clue to it.

Address Research Department, Current Anecdotes, Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, O.

PULPIT CHANGES.

Beginning in the January number we shall include again the pulpit changes, resignations, etc., preacher's name, where from and where to, of all denominations. By this you may watch the progress of your friends, and cases have been known where this department has given information of desirable vacancies. Dr. P. S. Henson, who went to Hanson Place, Brooklyn, two years ago, resigns to take Fremont Temple, Boston, formerly Dr. Lorimer's charge. Rev. David Gregg has been called to and is considering the presidency of Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburg. For thirteen years he has been pastor of Dr. Cuyler's church, the Lafayette Ave. Presbyterian.

THE BAPTIST PULPIT.

The first volume of a series under the above title will be from Len G. Broughton, of the Baptist Tabernacle, Atlanta, Ga. He recently received a call to Clarendon St. church, Boston, but his Atlanta people would not let him go, expressing their appreciation by clearing a \$17,000 debt. It will consist of about one dozen sermons under the title of "New Light on Old Truth." It will come from the press about March 15, and will be sent to those ordering in advance, postpaid, for \$1.00, money to be sent when you receive the book. F. M. BARTON, Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, O.

THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL EVANGEL

W. J. BARRETT, Editor
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ST. LOUIS, Oct. 19, 1908

Mr. F. M. Barton,
Cleveland, O.

My dear Mr. Barton:—
I am in receipt of your favor of the 15th, also vol. IV of The Biblical Encyclopedia, and note your intention to send the four other volumes. I am exceedingly pleased with the arrangement, and with the clear and concise presentation of each subject, as well as the wealth of illustration furnished. The arrangement is particularly acceptable to the very busy man. I shall give this set of books place of honor in my study, you may be sure. I shall take pleasure at the first opportunity in giving a good, strong editorial commendation of these volumes.

With best wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

W. J. Barrett

Partial list of our Devices for Keeping the Treasury full.

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Guaranteed**

We refund money in case 500% profit is not realized on the investment in our TITHING HELPS

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CHRISTIAN FINANCE ASSOCIATION

MAKES TITHING DEVICES WHICH

Builds Churches, Raises Church Debts.

Benevolences, Missionary and Special Collections secured by the use of the Tithe or Thank Offering Gleaner, the Tithing Star, * * * * * Cross, Dollar, etc., etc. * * * * *

30 CENTS worth of these will be sent to you ... **FOR 10c**

Use one of them yourself several days, or give one to each member of the smallest class in your Sunday School. The results in a day or two will enable you to buy an outfit of 100, 200 or 300, one for each one in your Church, Sunday School or Young People's Society. Regular Church Finances will be materially increased if you will distribute 50 or 100 Gleaners among members and friends who will not pledge any regular amount, or who cannot give regularly. These Gleaners contain Scripture quotations on giving and tithing, and will educate the most careless in the grace of Christian giving

Your Tithe Gleaner is the best thing I ever used to collect money. I realized more than \$400.00 in less than two months from their use. Yours, R. I. GAINES, 625 Berger St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Sirs:—We have raised through the Tithe Gleaners \$351.40; Tithing Dollars \$266.37. Very truly yours, W. J. WOOD, Trenton, N. J.

Gentlemen:—Permit me to say that we found the use of Tithing Devices helped us greatly in the use of same, and especially among our young people. With sincerest regard, I am, faithfully yours, J. WILBUR CHAPMAN, D. D., Pastor Fourth Presbyterian Church, New York.

Dear Sirs:—Will you please send me one hundred Tithing Dollars? Send bill and I will remit promptly. The 50 Tithing Dollars I purchased in March brought in just \$50.00 in ten days, for Children's Missionary Society. Fraternally yours, Rev. E. V. KING, Phillipsburg, N. J.

CHRISTIAN FINANCE ASSOCIATION,

Washington and Cortlandt Sts., New York, N. Y.

Please send me further information about your TITHING devices for raising money.

Amount to be raised is \$.....
(If Sample Outfit is desired, enclose 10c.)

Name

Church

Address

Prices range from \$3.00 to \$6.00 per 100 for different devices. Less 20 per cent. discount.

One of \$10,000.00.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 29th, 1900.

Dear Sirs:—The church I am now pastor of, I stayed from the auction block. When I took it, it was bankrupt both in faith and finance. Now it flourishes, and debts it once had to repudiate are now being paid at face value. The secret of my success is a system of raising money. The system is your Tithing devices for church help. I have used almost everything you make. Have raised over \$10,000.00 where other pastors have failed to make a payment on the church debt for 20 years. Yours cordially,

REV. H. H. HARRIS.



CHURCH DECORATION.

Condensed from a pamphlet on the above subject by H. Snowden Ward.

Some seasons, such as Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, stand out prominently as affording the great opportunities for church decoration.

Harvest Home and Thanksgiving, though originally the same feast, have been parted since the church was planted in America, so that the American Thanksgiving, the date of which is fixed each year by proclamation of the President and of the Governors of the States, comes later than the English Harvest Thanksgiving, the date of which is fixed for each church and parish by its parson and officials.

The origin of floral decorations lies in Pagan times, when worthy worshippers praised the giver of all good, rejoicing in the spring-time with rites that survive partly in our Easter services and partly in our May-day processions; while they rendered thanks at harvest in those rites of Bacchus which have their successors in our harvest and hock-tide suppers, and in our thanksgivings in the churches.

Church decoration, carried out in a reverent spirit, may be made a very helpful side of religious life; and it is pleasant to find that in our flower services, toy services, and other special seasons, the children are being taught the lesson of glad personal sacrifice for the good of the poor and suffering. This phase of harvest thanksgiving, too, when the flowers, fruits, and vegetables are chosen not only for their decorative quality, but also for their value to the poor, and to the hospital patients after they have been used in the church, is worthy of all encouragement.

Time, place, religious belief, quantity and kind of materials available, and style of church to be decorated, vary so much that it is impossible to give very definite and detailed instructions, but the following simple rules may be laid down:

1. The decoration must be a labor of love.
2. The main idea must be wealth and abundance (thankfulness), so that it is better to richly decorate the pulpit and chancel-screen than to skimpily cover the whole building. Effective massing is the great thing.

The style of your church and the details of arches, pillars, pulpit, font, etc., will, of course, govern your design.

Legitimate touches of color are provided by shields on which any of the Christian emblems may be used, giving preference to those which are bold and simple.

Greenery is not inappropriate to any feast.

Wild flowers are especially appropriate as emphasizing the idea of using God's natural gifts, and the further idea of personal service in the gathering and decorating. Our forefathers brought largely of the field and hedge-row flowers for the decorating; so much so, that we are told that one of the commonest of the cardamines took its common name of lady's-smock from its general use in decorations on the feast of Our Lady.

Berries and wild fruits may well be used; and even great bunches of meadow grasses, reeds, and rushes help to vary the effects of color, and to carry out the idea of nature's lavish wealth and beauty.

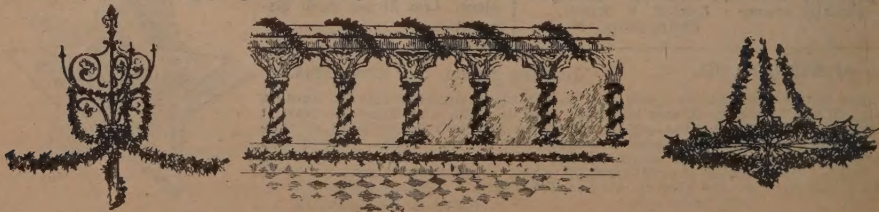
Material is plentiful wherever the fields and woods are within reach and there are willing workers. Scented herbs and flowers have gone out of fashion to a considerable extent, not only in general cultivation, but also in church decoration, yet the old idea of a scented church is as beautiful in its way as the old idea of a garden of sweet odors. Of course, where incense is largely used, the scented herbs would have little chance; but in other churches great bunches of lavender, of roses, and of some of the heavily perfumed wild flowers would carry a message to the sense of smell as well as to the sense of sight. In the old days juniper and other sweet-burning plants were burned in the church before the service, for the sake of their scents.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the churches were not only decorated on feast-days, but also on fast-days. On such occasions bitter herbs were used, and a portion, at least, of them were strewn on the floor, that they might be bruised by the feet and give forth their odor.

Certain non-fixed days may be suggested as suitable to be marked by more or less floral decoration. The Sunday School feast seems a time for flowers and for remembering the sufferers in children's hospitals.

The decoration of graves with flowers may be held not entirely outside the present subject; and for such remembering of the dead, Palm Sunday has from time immemorial been specially selected. In America the national holiday of Decoration Day has taken the place of Palm Sunday, and in other lands the habit of decorating the graves has been largely dropped, but it might with advantage be revived.

In conclusion, whatever is the time or method of the decoration, it is made good or bad by the spirit underlying it. In every case the test of its appropriateness is found in the answer to the question whether it is done for ostentation, or *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*.



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Entered at the Post Office at Cleveland, O., as second class matter.

Issued **DECEMBER, 1903** Monthly

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